

# Swarthmore

SEPTEMBER 2007

COLLEGE BULLETIN



Word as Image: The Art of Alexandra Grant



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Artist Alexandra Grant '94 in her studio in The Women's Building in Los Angeles.

Photograph by Tierney Gearon. Story on page 16.

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Swarthmore's campus is famous for its stone buildings. The marks of toothed chisels in the arches of the Clothier Hall cloisters are visible in this stone rubbing and photograph by Jeffrey Lott. For more on stone at Swarthmore, see pages 2 and 28.

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My five-minute walk from the Science Center parking lot to the Publications Office in the Sproul Observatory ends with a stroll through the Clothier Hall cloisters. Before plunging into the day's work, I often stop in this Gothic-arched space to marvel at the bell tower soaring above or check on the winter-flowering Chinese witch hazel or the peach-colored rose (named Polka) that climbs Clothier's south wall in summer. But it is the magnificence of the cloisters' stone that holds particular fascination.

In addition to its rolling lawns and towering trees, much of the beauty of Swarthmore's campus is found in its stone. From flagstone walks to granite steps to sparkling gneissic rock laid up in sturdy walls, the earthy strength of stone tells a powerful story about Swarthmore. Beyond their obvious aesthetic appeal, the College's stone buildings speak of the permanence of this enterprise—and of its strong foundation.

The stone for Parrish Hall came from the Leiper Quarry along Crum Creek, just south of Swarthmore, and was hauled by horse and wagon to the building site. (In 1809, Leiper, an immigrant from Strathhaven, Scotland, built the first railway in America to transport his products about two miles to Ridley Creek, where it could reach the Delaware River.) It is known as Strathhaven stone, a variant of the quartz- and mica-flecked Wissahickon schist that forms the bedrock of the Philadelphia area.

## BEYOND THEIR OBVIOUS AESTHETIC APPEAL, STONE BUILDINGS SPEAK OF THE PERMANENCE OF THIS ENTERPRISE—AND OF ITS STRONG FOUNDATION.

Of course, there are some fine Swarthmore buildings of other materials. Beardsley Hall (1907) is an early concrete-block building, built in the Palladian style. The former DuPont Science Building—now largely subsumed by the new Science Center—and Willets Hall are typical of the spare institutional style of the 1950s and 1960s. But when it could, the College has always favored stone.

I have a favorite piece of stone on my walk to work. You can see it on the inside cover of this issue—the voussoir on the left side of a cloister arch, immediately above the impost. My rubbing of it reveals the lines of a craftsman's toothed chisel as he shaped this block when Clothier was erected nearly 80 years ago.

I often touch this stone as I pass through the cloisters, a kind of mezuzah as I start my day. I think of the mason who dressed and placed this rock and the quarry worker who wrested it from the earth. Their labor lives on in this quiet place. The College has had many builders, including determined Quakers who sought a sheltered education for their children and many visionary scholars and leaders who followed. All have left the fruits of their labors here. They shared a great idea called Swarthmore College—and they built it in stone.

—Jeffrey Lott



## Swarthmore COLLEGE BULLETIN

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**"FUNDAMENTAL TRUTHS" CHALLENGED**

I understand that your "Letters" section is a supplement to the *Bulletin* and not a public forum, but Robert Rowley's [61] letter in the March *Bulletin* is so egregious and ultimately so embarrassing for the College's intellectual credentials and its Quaker origins that it demands a response.

Rowley's letter, mistakenly titled "Fundamental Truths," is a virtual catalogue of faulty argument, to wit: state the obvious ("we are at war"); use a fuzzy generality ("democracy implies responsibility"); find a false historical parallel ("does the name Neville Chamberlain mean anything to anyone?"); propose a highly debatable proposition that is entirely inapplicable to our present situation in Iraq ("sometimes war is the only route to peace"); and rationalize a tragically mistaken course of action with a personal loss ("I am still hopeful that my son-in-law's death on 9/11 was not in vain").

HENRY BASSIN '57  
Solsberry, Ind.

**A DISTINCTION WITHOUT A DIFFERENCE**

I was delighted to read about Religion and Spirituality on Campus Week in the June *Bulletin*.

Most serious problems that the world faces involving human interaction come from seeing difference where we should be seeing similarity—of failing to understand, as the ancient philosophers said, that "we need to see each person as not other than our Self." We all believe *something*—even atheists believe something, often more strongly than even those of us who chose to follow an organized religion. *What we believe simply distinguishes us from each other, just as what we wear for clothing or what baseball team we root for is a distinction. Without such distinctions, this would be an incredibly boring world. (Imagine a Swarthmore College peopled by individuals who agreed totally about every aspect of their lives.)*

In law school, we learned the phrase "a distinction without a difference." In my view, such distinctions are just that. The underlying similarities are often hidden by our failing to understand that each one of

us is a manifestation of the same creative force—whatever we choose to call that force. Aldous Huxley's *The Perennial Philosophy*, in which he elaborates on the similarity of the underlying concepts of all past and present philosophical and religious traditions, would be a worthwhile book to discuss if this week is repeated on campus.

On the other hand, creating and acting on perceptions of "difference" has been the cause of so much grief and often leads to invidious discrimination. In this regard, religions have, alas, historically often given us some prime examples of the evils associated with creating difference—the Crusades, for example, or the Inquisition. Even some Quakers, who profess to believe that there is something of the Light in every person, are capable of discrimination against non-Quakers at times. If the human race is to survive, we must get beyond this.

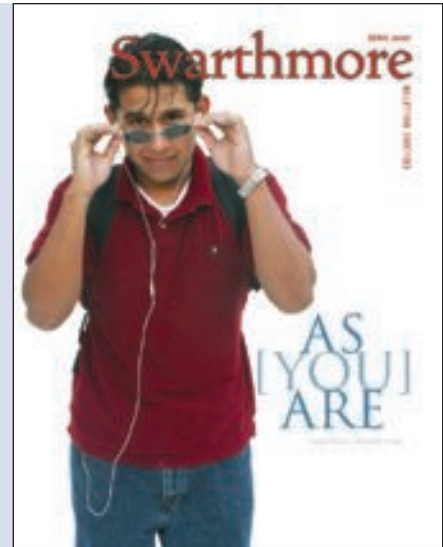
Studying diverse religions as well as forms of nonreligious spirituality with an open mind can only lead to better understanding in the world. The Rev. Joyce Tompkins and her colleagues are to be congratulated for initiating this program. It is an incredibly worthwhile way to spend a week. I really hope it becomes an annual event.

BOB FREEDMAN '58  
New York City

**A BALANCE OF MIND, SPIRIT, AND BODY**

I was thrilled to read "A Taste of Spirituality" (June 2007 *Bulletin*), to see that faith and God are making a comeback on campus after many of us in the 1960s and 1970s declared God dead. A total person is a balance of mind, spirit and body. The article quoted Hoa Pham as saying that he believes most Swarthmoreans, as people of intellect, are their own support and have no need, in essence, for God. My question is: What do you do when you reach your limits and have exhausted all other resources? I believe each of us has or will come to that point eventually.

The concepts of faith and religion have occupied some of the world's greatest minds for thousands of years. How can one say their lives and writings are irrelevant? Some examples from earlier centuries are



Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, Teresa of Avila, and John of the Cross. Some of the more contemporary great minds include G.K. Chesterton, C.S. Lewis, John Paul II and Thomas Merton. I can understand an atheist or agnostic who has tasted the writings of these great intellects and still declines to seek further. I cannot understand one who has little or no knowledge of them and yet declines.

ROGER KARNY '76  
Denver

**NO BLOODTHIRSTY XENOPHOBES**

Diane Levine Umemoto '65 ("Home Abroad," March *Bulletin*) is mistaken when she says, "For most Americans, people in the rest of the world ... are non-people, too alien to relate to." She continues by implying that those of us living in the United States are not as concerned about America's role beyond our borders. Although it's undoubtedly true that some Americans fall into the group Umemoto describes, lumping us all together as bloodthirsty xenophobes does a great disservice to the varied beliefs of our citizens. Considering that many expatriates who echo her refrain have not lived in the United States for several years, they can hardly be taken as experts on what Americans believe.

At this moment, our country is divided right up the middle politically. There are no "prevailing" views: our president's party represents one side of the debate, and the party in control of our Congress represents the other. Then there are those of us who

*Please turn to page 78.*

# COMMENCEMENT 2007

## OUTREACH OVER CONFRONTATION: *Commencement Address by President Alfred H. Bloom*

I would like you to consider briefly with me the readiness of so many to move to confrontation in the face of challenges stemming from difference.

In 1995, I led a small delegation from U.S. Quaker-affiliated educational institutions to North Korea. Over the week there, our relationship to the educators and highly placed government officials we had come to meet steadily evolved from polite collegue-ship to genuine human connection. As each day passed, both sides felt freer to talk about our personal and professional lives, freer to indulge in warm and playful humor, and freer to ask the questions we really wanted to ask. And well before the end of the visit, we knew that, although there were still questions not fully answered, we could trust the sincerity of the answers we did receive.

A year later, several of the officials we had met in Pyongyang came to campus, as part of a North Korean mission to the United States. The conversations resumed as if without a break, or perhaps because of the perspective offered by the break, with even greater openness than before. We discussed candidly the stereotypes we had brought to our first encounter and the prejudices and fears that would have to be overcome for

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*Photographs by Eleftherios Kostans and Stuart Watson*

Menacing clouds hanging over the Scott Amphitheater on the morning of June 3 failed to darken the spirits of the 348 graduating seniors who were gathered there for the College's 135th Commencement ceremony. As the overflowing amphitheater shook with the cheers of parents, friends, and faculty and staff members, the seniors slow-marched to their seats, each swaying gown brightened by a single freshly cut rose, chosen minutes earlier from the Dean Bond Rose Garden. Their procession was accompanied by a stunning performance—including a trumpet solo whose sweet, magical tones soared above the tulip poplars—of the African American spiritual “Down in the River To Pray,” arranged and conducted by Associate Professor of Music John Alston.

The instant President Alfred H. Bloom approached the podium to welcome those present, the fire horn atop the College's heat plant pronounced its own eerie greeting with all-too-familiar repeated triple blasts—

twice. “We cannot foresee everything,” Bloom joked, to loud applause.

In addition to conferring degrees on the Class of '07, Bloom awarded honorary degrees to Marcia A. Grant '60, an educator and founding dean of the first liberal arts college for women in Saudi Arabia; Robert Parris Moses, a civil rights leader and founder of the Algebra Project; and Robert Prichard '71, the president and CEO of Torstar Corporation and former president of the University of Toronto. The senior speaker, chosen by her classmates, was Eva Holman.

One day earlier, Centennial Professor of Anthropology and Director of the Lang Center for Civic and Social Responsibility Jennie Keith had spoken to the class at Baccalaureate services, followed by former dean Robert “Bob” Gross '62, who delivered the Last Collection address. Both speakers were, in accordance with tradition, chosen by the senior class.

—Carol Brévert-Demm

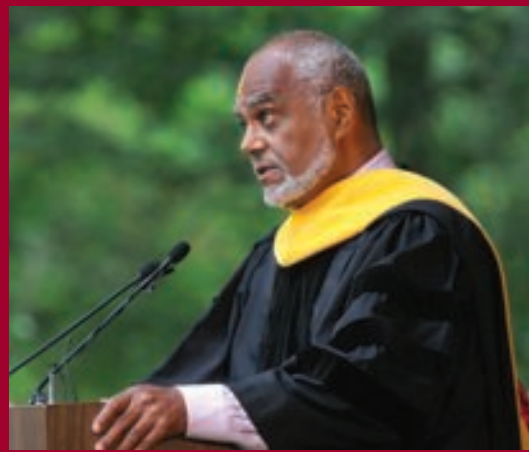




**Marcia Grant '60**, who received an honorary Doctor of Laws degree, has had careers in academe and the foreign service. Passionate about promoting women in their education and careers, she credits Swarthmore for equipping her to take on the challenge in 1999 of starting Effat College, a liberal arts college for women, in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. She traces her role in the creation of the college back to a simple thank-you note to Princess Lolowah al-Faisal after the original proposal for the college was rejected. Only after she included her vision for the college in her thank-you note did she learn that the first proposal had been turned down because of its complex legal jargon. Currently, Grant is helping to plan a faculty of arts and sciences for a new liberal arts college at the Aga Khan University in Karachi, Pakistan.

“Starting at Swarthmore as a political science major,” she told the Commencement crowd, “I have learned to value academic freedom, the thrill of ideas, the challenge of friendships across cultures, finding in the connectedness of this whole global society wonderful people who share enthusiasm and optimism. What I have come to understand about myself, personally, is that I like to keep my learning curve steep.

“So what I wish for you are three things: That you take the risk of making real the ideas and dreams that you have in your heads; that you ask the help of your friends and families in making them happen; and that you, too, keep your learning curves steep! And, as you embark on this next chapter of risk taking, learning, and exploration—don’t forget to write your thank-you notes.”



**Robert Parris Moses**, who received an honorary Doctor of Science degree, has been a civil rights activist for more than four decades. A 1982 recipient of the MacArthur “Genius” Grant, he is the founder and president of the Algebra Project, a mathematics program that helps low-income students and students of color—particularly African American and Latino/a students—achieve the math skills they need to perform successfully in today’s technology-driven society.

“Doing voter registration in the 1960s was not radical per se,” he said. “Taking sit-in movement insurgencies, nemeses of Jim-Crow, into 1960s Mississippi; doing voter registration to gain political access for Delta sharecroppers was. Getting down to and understanding the root cause of Jim-Crow, facing it and devising means to uproot it, was radical—Ella Baker ‘radical.’ Easier said than done, as is getting down to who we are as a nation of constitutional people. Understanding that Africans in America, after 1787, were reborn as constitutional property. That, after the Civil War—under sharecropping and sharecropper education, driven, always down, by Jim-Crow—African Americans evolved as constitutional strangers until sit-in insurgents, nemeses of Jim-Crow, occupied seats as constitutional people at, of all places, Woolworth’s five and 10 cents lunch counters.

“In these historical footsteps, the Algebra Project with the Young People’s Project stride as 21st-century math insurgents, occupying seats as constitutional people, as school math insurgents, nemeses of the nation’s legacies of sharecropper education. Join our education insurgency. Teach math with us in the New Orleans public schools.”



**J. Robert Prichard '71**, who received an honorary Doctor of Laws degree, is president and chief executive officer of Torstar Corporation, a leading Canadian media company whose two principal businesses are newspapers, including the *Toronto Star*, and book publishing. He is president emeritus of the University of Toronto, where he served for 10 years.

“Don’t feel compelled to follow a straight line or conform to anyone else’s plan,” he told the graduating class. “Much of what is best in life will be found in the detours, the zigs and zags. This is where I learned the most and found what mattered most to me, what I cared about and what I believed. It was trying new things, exploring and experimenting, that fueled this voyage of discovery. And don’t think you need to start at the front of the pack to succeed.

“Care most to protect the right of dissent and to support the voices of change.

“I have devoted my career to two causes: higher education and a free press. The common theme has been the centrality of ideas and fundamental freedoms—academic freedom and freedom of the press. A recurring lesson for me in both these arenas has been the ubiquity of threats to these freedoms. Recent concerns about terrorism have only magnified these threats. The threats always come cloaked in the guise of some competing good, but whatever the argument advanced by those who wish to constrain our freedoms, I urge you to be skeptical and to defend the eternal power of the freedom of ideas. Swarthmore College has been stalwart and courageous in its defense of these freedoms. You must be, too, if you are to preserve and expand the full possibilities of a free society.”



our nations and populations to develop mutual trust. We took great satisfaction in the surprisingly warm and relaxed personal connections we had come to enjoy.

And, most importantly, we recognized an unanticipated convergence in personal commitment to shaping more just and humane societies and a more cooperative world, all the while acknowledging differences in the obstacles on our nations' respective paths and differences in our conceptions of the ideal society.

In 2002, the United States identified North Korea as a member of the Axis of Evil, beyond the reach of initiatives of trust and candor. Confrontation supplanted dialogue. And that, in my opinion ill-conceived, too ready and perilous shift—from outreach to confrontation—with its implications not only for international relations, but for all human interactions, prompts my remarks to you, the Class of 2007.

**IF THERE IS A CHANCE  
FOR OUTREACH TO  
SUCCEED, GREATER  
MORAL STRENGTH  
LIES IN PERSISTING IN  
THE SEARCH FOR  
COMMON GROUND.**

As each of you assumes leadership of this century's professions, institutions, corporations, communities, and societies you will constantly face the challenge of crossing differences of personality, experience, perspective and conviction. And when those differences become complicated by threats to security, resources, status, or pride, that leadership will be put to a severe test. But it is then that the ability to bridge differences that you have cultivated here will become crucial to forging the shared understanding and purpose that enable intellectual advance, institutional and corporate accomplishment, societal justice and international progress and peace.

Far too often in the attempt to cross difference, as perceptions of unfairness and risk intensify, willingness to listen, rather than redoubling, shuts down. Faith in the other as a human being capable of responding to initiatives of trust and care, capable



of achieving an objective view, capable of engaging in collaborative exploration dissolves, to be replaced by a construction of the other, as so blinded by personal or ideological agenda, so devoid of breadth of concern and complexity of perspective, so lacking in moral compass, as to be incapable of joining in a mutual search for common ground.

What might have been a partnership devolves into a power struggle in a zero-sum game. Labels, accusations, and threats multiply, aggravated by assertive and retaliatory behavior, further heightening risk, entrenching the discount by each side of the humanity of the other, allowing conviction and emotion to increasingly suppress concern for evidence and truth, and, most dangerously, making violence appear a more legitimate and righteous response.

Throughout your lives, you have watched this scenario, playing out in individual relationships, in intergroup interactions, as well as in international conflict, and you're acutely aware of the damage, if not devastation, that so often results.

Of course, there are times when responsibility demands confrontation, for example, in the face of intolerable conditions or risks, such as violent criminality, Nazi aggression or terrorism, or in the face of rejection of persistent demands for justice, such as in the American Revolution or Martin Luther King's non-violent, though confrontational, struggle.

But I am convinced that there are many more times when a too ready shift to confrontation pre-empts outreach, with major opportunities for bridging differences lost.

And I am further convinced that that too ready shift to confrontation is particularly driven by three pernicious, but surmountable conditions: the first, a climate that interprets adopting a muscular stance as the measure of moral strength, especially when the going gets tough; the second, a tendency, incompatible with current realities, to overestimate the power of asserting power; and the third, an alarming lack of experience with crossing human divides—an inexperience which makes those divides appear much more formidable than they are and often undercuts the ability of leaders even to imagine crossing them.

But these three conditions, your Swarthmore experience has fitted you to overcome!

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As soon-to-be Swarthmore graduates you have developed, as a component of your ethical intelligence, your own capacity to define moral strength.

Despite a climate in which confronting adversaries, with power, is often the sign of moral strength, and reaching out to them the mark of moral weakness, I would argue that, if there is a chance for outreach to succeed, greater moral strength lies in persisting in the search for common ground. And when engaging the perspective of an adversary persuades you to adjust your own view of what is right, I would argue that it is not capitulation, concession, or naiveté, but an even stronger reflection of moral strength, to affirm and act on that adjusted sense of right.

If you agree, I call on you to lead others to redefine the concept “moral strength,” so that being morally strong does not equate with unilateral assertion of right and power, but more often with the courage to resist pressure to adopt a muscular stance.

As soon-to-be Swarthmore graduates, you know how counterproductive the results of asserting power tend to be in a world whose population has, at every level, come to expect, and demand, respect and inclusion.

You have compared the consequences of the Treaty of Versailles with those of the Marshall Plan. You have examined the costs of exclusion from the decision-making of institutions and societies and witnessed the resentment, resistance and short-lived solutions that result. You have seen, in the international arena, the peril associated with imposing one’s own will on others, no matter how rooted in humanity and justice the

rationale. And, in welcome contrast, you have experienced in this community, the quality, shared ownership, and enduring nature of decisions reached through inclusive processes, anchored in our Quaker tradition.

So I call on you to remember, and remind others, not to overestimate what confrontation and asserting power buy today. As soon-to-be Swarthmore graduates, through the breadth of your academic work and your own personal engagement across the rich diversity of this and other communities, you have come to recognize that desires for security, well-being, recognition, opportunity, justice and cooperative resolution reliably transcend human divides. That recognition leads you to seek, and to find, virtues in individuals whom others write off, passions for justice among advocates whose motivation others discount as self-interest, heterogeneity in populations that others condemn as monoliths of hatred and evil. And that recognition also gives you the confidence others so often lack, that a foundation for building common ground lies beneath even the most formidable divides.

Furthermore, through your academic and community experience here you have developed the habits of listening, of extending a respect that builds respect, of investing trust that inspires trust, of supporting others in the expression of their insights and convictions, and of stretching to understand as fully and as disinterestedly as you can the other’s point of view. You have also developed the habit and the skill to reconcile the other’s view with your own, through clarifying where perspectives and convictions converge and delineating the differences that remain. Together these habits and that skill enable you to create emotionally and intellectually safe space where differences in perception and conviction can be made clear and where either side convinced in part or whole by the other can adjust its view of

what is acceptable and right, without loss of pride or advantage.

These habits and that skill, basic to effective seminars, to intellectual communities, and to the search for truth, are likewise the very means for forging shared understanding and purpose on that foundation of human commonality you recognize is there.

So I call on you, who not only recognize the universal foundation for human collaboration but also have the habits and skill to build a collaborative world upon that foundation, to hold out—whenever you responsibly can and for as long as you responsibly can—for outreach over confrontation, to refuse to let even a moment of asserting power tip the balance from potential partnership into a downward spiraling, zero-sum game.

As we look ahead, how likely are we to build the cohesion that enables collective accomplishment within families, institutions, corporate enterprises and societies without honoring expectations for respect and inclusion? How likely are we to heal rifts between the West and the Islamic world without creating contexts that support the adjustments in perspective on both sides that generate shared vision? How likely are we to achieve a lasting peace in North Korea without dialogue enriched by the candor and care I experienced 12 years ago in Pyongyang? How likely are we to repair America’s image as a genuine leader of the world without projecting confidence in the transformative power of outreach? How likely are we to address the universal concerns of poverty, human rights, the environment, security and peace if we abandon faith in the humanity of those with whom we must deal?

Given who you are, your independent understanding of moral strength, your awareness of what confrontation and the assertion of power cannot buy, your recognition of the foundations of human commonality and remarkable ability to build upon it, and your experience of a community that seeks outreach over confrontation, I ask you, on whatever path you take, whenever you responsibly can, turn from confrontation, reach for and inspire others to reach for our shared humanity. I could not be more confident in the leadership you will each bring to this, the most important challenge of our time. ☞



STEVEN GOLDBLATT '67

AN AFTERLIFE FOR THE

# Bender Oak

According to tree experts, the massive *Quercus x benderi* east of the Faulkner Tennis Courts witnessed the founding of Swarthmore in 1864, but the College will have to go on without the massive old oak. Well, almost.

Although its dying limbs were amputated on August 15, the tree's remaining trunk—which measures some 19 feet in circumference—will become a wood sculpture.

Variouly estimated to be between 150 and 300 years old, the natural hybrid tree has been in significant decline in recent years. The Scott Arboretum worked to preserve the tree, cabling and pruning it, but the remaining branches were recently deemed unsafe.

In January, renowned wood carver Marty Long will transform the stump into sculpture with an oak-leaf and acorn motif, extending the tree's life beyond its deciduous years. "We're turning a problem into an opportunity," says Claire Sawyers, director of the arboretum.

—Jeffrey Lott

A little girl sits on the floor of the College's Lamb-Miller Field House, her back against a jumbled pile of goods, including an upholstered cushion, pillows, a feather bed, bags stuffed with clothing, a couple of lamps, and more. Resting her feet on a skateboard, she says she's guarding the pile while her mom continues to browse. Nearby, zealous

in to clean up dorm rooms, followed by Macri and Isakowitz with several other volunteers. For days, they collected, sorted, and, in a miracle of organization, displayed the thousands of items from their impressive trove neatly on tables, racks, and in rows in the large field house space. Although other colleges have held similar sales, this was Swarthmore's first, and

picked, emptying tables, shortening rows, and shrinking piles. The prices of most articles ranged from 50 cents to \$20. With arms, boxes, beer crates, and, in one case, a wheelbarrow filled with bargains, shoppers lined up at the checkout to pay the overwhelmed but delighted volunteers.

Some who arrived at the actual start time of 4 p.m. were disappointed. "I came for a fridge," said Pat

## one person's trash is . . .

shoppers—anxious to land a bargain—rapidly dismantle a wall of 41 mini-fridges, which are priced between \$5 and \$20 each. Others fall upon the 300 three-ring binders; 500 or so pairs of women's and men's shoes; 47 waste baskets; 147 pole, desk, and clip-on lamps; 48 fans; 30 computer printers; 20 computer monitors; 30 full-length mirrors; six microwaves; 30 large and 47 small rugs; as well as countless kettles, coffee pots, and vases; racks and tables full of brand-name dresses, sweaters, and T-shirts; couches; chairs; tables—and endless other articles left behind by students unable or unwilling to take them home at the end of the academic year.

This was the scene of the College's first Trash 2 Treasure Sale on June 15 and 16, organized by juniors Juliana Macri and Marina Isakowitz. Rather than see the wealth of still usable items go to waste, they decided to sell them and donate the profits to charity.

As students left for the summer, environmental services employees moved



JOHN COSTELLO/PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER

the organizers had no idea whether it would be a success. They need not have worried.

Publicized in *The Swarthmorean* and *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, the sale ran from 4 to 8 p.m. on Friday and from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Saturday. For an extra \$5, die-hard tag-sale shoppers could buy their way in early, at 3 p.m. on Friday, to get a head start. By 3:05 p.m., a tidal wave of customers had flooded the field house. Armed with maps showing them the quickest routes from belts to bedding, tank-tops to toys, furniture to fans, computers to kettles, rainwear to refrigerators, and lamps to loungewear, they poked, prodded, and

Juliana Macri and Marina Isakowitz take a break from setting up for the big sale.

Coyne, administrative coordinator in the Dean's Office, "but they're all gone."

"I was amazed at how much we were able to sell," said Macri, "although everything we collected was of high quality, so we had good stuff to work with. It felt great after all the work and time we put in to see how enthusiastic everyone was."

The sale reaped a total of \$12,317.14, which will go to the Chester Education Fund and the Chester Eastside Ministries.

—Carol Brévart-Demm

# Those (Not So) Lazy Days of Summer

SETH DONOUGHE

*This summer, 236 students—their thirst for knowledge still not quenched by the rigors of the Swarthmore academic year—pursued summer research projects in their chosen fields, funded by various grants and scholarships in amounts ranging from \$800 to \$3,750. More than 100 of them remained on campus. Hidden in labs, studios, classrooms, libraries, and offices, they immersed themselves in topics they're passionate about, spending much one-on-one time with their professors and much time alone. Some produced results that will be published in scholarly journals or presented at conferences. Read about four of them here.*

## WHEN BIG BUGS BAT THEIR WINGS

Many a hazy summer day finds biology major Seth Donoughe '08 wading in the Crum, wielding a huge net, hunting dragonflies and damselflies. Donoughe—continuing a recent group seminar project started by himself, James Crall '07, and Patrick Christmas '08—is researching the functional morphology of dragonfly wings to see how the wings bend and change shape during flight.

Descendants of a lineage dating back to the Carboniferous Age, dragonflies were the first aerial predators, Donoughe says, so they needed to be well coordinated for hovering, diving, and catching their prey on the wing. “Much research exists on how dragonflies move their wings and how insects fly, but the question of how the wing itself bends is new,” he says. To observe and obtain images of the wings and measure their flexural stiffness, he used a scanning electron microscope, access to which was facilitated by biologist John Weisel '68 at the University of Pennsylvania, and the College's confocal microscope to produce three-dimensional projections of the wing joints.

On the highly magnified images, Donoughe points out large veins connected by cross veins running through gossamer-like wing membrane. Many of the hundreds of cross veins taper at the point of connection to the main vein, merging

into tissue that—facilitated by a type of protein called resilin—is flexible. Others are rigid. Professor of Biology Rachel Merz, Donoughe's adviser, points out the many scratches on the double-layered wing membrane. “It really gives you a strong sense that these wings have had a hard life,” she says.

For three weeks this summer, Crall joined Donoughe to film dragonflies in flight with a high-speed camera, enabling them to observe the subtleties of wing shape during flight. For tests to identify the properties of individual joints, they “adapted a technique that Rachel has used in past research,” Donoughe says.

During the semester, Donoughe, Crall, and Christmas created a map of the wing, using red and blue points to show which joints flex from the top and which from the bottom, “like hinges,” Donoughe says.

“Mapping the joint distribution this way is an original contribution of these students,” Merz says. “It gives an exciting perspective on the dynamic shape changes possible in the wing during flight.” They plan to present their results at the Society of Integrative and Comparative Biology conference in San Antonio in January 2008.

## LANGUAGE RESCUE

Honors linguistics major Miranda Weinberg '09 joined Assistant Professor of Linguistics David Harrison this summer to work on a model to identify languages that are in danger of dying out. Named “Language Hotspots,” the model is an ongoing collaborative project between the nonprofit Living Tongues Institute for Endangered Languages, which Harrison co-founded, and National Geographic.

“Language hotspots are the areas with the greatest levels of linguistic diversity worldwide and the highest concentrations of endangered languages,” explains Harrison.

Of the world's 7,000 living languages, about half of them are predicted to become extinct by the end of the 21st century, Weinberg says. Found in regions of the world with many different languages belonging to widely varying language families, most have only few speakers to pass them on to succeeding generations. And most have not yet been adequately studied or documented. “They have no writing system,” Weinberg says. “so once the last speaker dies, the language dies, too.”

Part of the project, she says, includes expeditions to meet with speakers of endangered languages and document, record, and film them. Harrison is spending part of

STUART WATSON



Seth Donoughe and James Crall hunt for research specimens in the Crum.

STUART WATSON



Miranda Weinberg helps provide David Harrison with data for a field trip.

the summer in northern Australia, where, Weinberg adds, there are “hundreds of undocumented languages.” Although not an expedition participant herself, she helped prepare Harrison for the trip, collecting data from field reports of anthropologists and linguists as well as from census statistics and Internet resources.

Weinberg’s main role has been to compile material for the project’s Web site. After meeting early in the summer with other project participants in Washington, D.C., she wrote a project description, an introduction to endangered languages, facts on each hotspot, trivia about the languages, and a glossary of technical terms.

“Trying to make linguistics—not a very media-friendly field—accessible to people who have never thought of studying language (as opposed to *a* language) was quite a challenge,” Weinberg says. “Some of my work included taking grant applications—the only written descriptions of the project—and translating them into more concise, gripping language appropriate for a Web site. I hope that the site and the project will not only introduce the broader public to the issue of language endangerment but also encourage people to think about language itself.”

A feature on endangered languages, including a map compiled for the project showing language hotspots worldwide, will appear in the October issue of *National Geographic* accompanied by a link to the Web site ([www.languagehotspots.org](http://www.languagehotspots.org)).

## WHEN ATOMS AND MOLECULES COLLIDE

Senior chemistry majors Nathan La Porte and Justin Massey are attempting to help unravel some of the mysteries of atmospheric chemistry by causing collisions between atoms and molecules.

“One of the most important events that occurs in chemistry is the collision of atoms and molecules—in the gas phase or in solution,” explains James H. Hammons Professor of Chemistry Tom Stephenson, their adviser. “It has been well documented from satellite studies and measurements carried out from the space shuttle that oxygen (O) atoms collide with nitric oxide (NO) molecules in the upper part of the atmosphere and that these collisions perturb the distribution of energy within the nitric oxide molecule.” The goal is to reproduce these collisions in the laboratory and, using laser-induced fluorescence, examine how they affect nitric oxide.

Stephenson believes that their results will be of interest to scientists who develop models of energy flow in the atmosphere because O + NO collisions are important for determining energy flow in the upper

STUART WATSON



Nathan LaPorte, Justin Massey, and Tom Stephenson adjust the laser.

atmosphere (above 85 kilometers).

Early in the summer, the students created similar collisions using atoms and molecules of bromine (Br<sub>2</sub>) gas with other atoms and molecules, to identify how those collisions affect electronic energy.

The students are enthusiastic about performing groundbreaking research. “It’s a real challenge to do something that’s never been done before,” Massey says. La Porte adds: “There’s nobody to call when something doesn’t work. When you’re setting something up, and you have a large set of things that need to be adjusted, if they’re not all adjusted just right, you get nothing—but that’s what makes it all the more rewarding when you *do* get spikes on the graph.”

Stephenson and the students will use the collected data to compile a paper for publication in a scientific journal. La Porte, an honors student, will continue the project throughout his senior year.

## FOCUS ON SCULPTURE

Sara Haley '08, a fine arts major, loves “getting paid to spend the summer doing art.” Focusing on sculpture, she is exploring the topic “Woman and Family: A Personal Exploration Through Portraiture” by creating clay busts of her grandmother, mother, and herself. After researching feminist theory, female artists, and the ways that women are represented in art, she decided to take a personal approach by rendering three generations of female family members in clay.

Haley, who loves having clay beneath her fingernails, says: “I feel really comfortable working in that medium. It’s free, fluid, and that’s my style of working—a very natural approach to sculpting.”

Once the family members’ busts are finished, she will attempt some “very quick, one-sitting busts” of her apartment mates.

Haley’s adviser, Professor of Studio Art Brian Meunier, says: “The fact that Sarah chose to work with female relatives impressed me. They look very much like her, but they’re at different ages, with different variables and types. An artist can learn a lot from working on a series. It’s a controlled experiment. The control is their genetic type, and then you have the variables. It’s difficult to discover the differences and unique aspects in people who look similar. A number of psychological aspects also affect the project because of the close relationship she has with her mother and grandmother.”

Haley, a California native, works from photos of her mother and grandmother. She agrees that the challenge lies in capturing the right physical and emotional mix. “At the physical level,” she says, “I’ve spent years looking at their faces—I know them, but thinking of the emotional attachment changes how I see them.”

Meunier sees a challenge in that Haley is working on bust portraiture, a genre with a clearly defined image in western art. “It’s difficult to be both accurate in representation yet add that little nuance that makes it her own style. But I’m already starting to get a sense of Sarah through her art. It will be really interesting to see how she refines that this year.”

—Carol Brévert-Demm

ELEFTHERIOS KOSTANS



Sara Haley refines the clay busts she is creating of her mother, grandmother, and herself.



COURTESY OF KEITH REEVES '88

# MENTORS FOR MIND AND SPIRIT

In August at his home in Purchase, N.Y., Richard Rubin, part-time professor of political science and public policy (*second from right*), hosted a gathering of alumni he has mentored—(*left to right*) Gordon Govens '85, Keith Reeves '88, Thomas Burton '85, Maurice Foley '82, and Steve Howard. A new student mentoring program has been named in Rubin's honor.

Perhaps life is really a series of highways  
filled with forks in the road—high roads, low roads,

and roads less traveled. It makes sense, then, that we need mentors to give us direction, help us find our bearings when we feel lost. For four former students—Maurice Foley '82, Gordon Govens '85, Keith Reeves '88, and Philip Weiser '90—that mentor was part-time Professor of Political Science and Public Policy Richard Rubin. In 2004, they started the Richard Rubin Scholars Mentoring Program to institutionalize similar guidance for current and future generations of Swarthmore students.

Rubin's four former students donated the seed money to start the program, and Rubin himself also contributed a substantial amount to the cause. With the help of Vice President for Alumni and Development Dan West, the program became a reality. The first group of students was chosen at the end of the 2004–2005 academic year.

The program, Rubin says, aims to provide guidance to students from backgrounds that sometimes lack important links and advice counseling due to economic or social circumstances. Students in the program are provided with mentors from the College faculty or staff and, from their sophomore year on, may benefit from further mentoring and participation in paid internships hosted by alumni in established careers. Separate from Career Services, the program has its own database of internships and mentors. Program participants are either nominated by faculty or staff members with whom they already have mentoring relationships, or they may self-nominate and request campus mentors from among the faculty and staff.

"We're advising them not just in courses but also in life," Rubin says. "Students coming into Swarthmore have many ideas of what they want to do, and it's a valuable tool to get to know someone who can angle you for the different possibilities after Swarthmore."

Recent program participant Danielle Toaltoan '07 took on two internships—one with the American Bar Foundation and another with Foley, her alumnus mentor and a U.S. tax court judge, who had benefited from Rubin's guidance after a shaky start at the College.

"The focus of my internship [with Judge Foley] was less on work than on developing a relationship with him. We had breakfast and lunch together, and I went to New York to see him perform in the courtroom," Toaltoan said. Foley also offered to sponsor Toaltoan's private LSAT tutoring. His willingness to help, paired with Toaltoan's relationship with on-campus mentor Assistant Dean and Gender Education Adviser Karen Henry '87 has provided her with an unfaltering support system. "They give me no chance to doubt myself," she said. "[Karen] always makes sure I'm doing OK; she's like a mother to me."

For Govens, whose mother passed away during his freshman year of college, Rubin was much more than just a professor in whom he could confide. "Some people have mentors in their family, but a college mentor takes on a role as a parent for those without someone to bounce ideas off of," he says. Govens, 44, says he still seeks Rubin's advice.

"The mentoring program supplements the college's academic advising. The academic advisor's role is to provide information to students on how best to use the curriculum when selecting courses and thinking about a possible course major. A Rubin mentor supplements academic advising by helping students learn how to navigate the College—such as connecting with faculty, accessing academic support, balancing social and academic demands, overcoming some of the social and psychological barriers they might encounter, and understanding the transition issues associated with leaving home and starting college," says Associate Dean for Multicultural Affairs Darryl Smaw, who also serves as director of the program.

Currently, the program seeks to increase the number of mentors and students within each annual group as well as the number of alumni willing to share their careers with students interested in their fields but lacking access to them.

"There's no manual to show you how to navigate those unknown waters," Govens said, "That's what a mentor is for."

—Lena Wong '10

# Modern Classic

Jane Lang Professor of Music Gerald Levinson jokes that his most recent composition *Toward Light*—written last year for the Philadelphia Orchestra and the inauguration of the new organ in Verizon Hall— attracts attention by the volume of sound it creates.

“It’s probably my loudest piece,” he says. Loud enough, in fact, to reach the ears of the Pew Fellowship Program selection panel members, who selected Levinson this spring to be honored with a coveted Pew Fellowship in the Arts. The Fellowship includes a \$50,000 unrestricted grant.

Recognizing the achievements of outstanding Philadelphia-area artists who have demonstrated their commitment to their fields, the fellowships, established in 1991 by the Pew Charitable Trusts, allow them the freedom to concentrate for an extended time on their work and explore it more fully.

“It’s a wonderful honor to be included among the distinguished and amazingly diverse artists who have been part of this program,” says Levinson, who has applied



ARI VALEN LEVINSON

more than once for the fellowship, awarded in each discipline only every four years. “This year, my work stands out as the only fully notated music intended for the traditional media of the concert hall.”

Other notable compositions by Levinson include *Anahata* (*Symphony No. 1*); *Black Magic/White Magic*, a collaboration with his wife, poet Nanine Valen; and several works for the College’s ensemble-in-residence, Orchestra 2001, which recently released two CDs of his music.

Although, as chairman of the Department of Music for the next two years, Levinson will be unable to devote himself to

Gerald Levinson rehearses in Philadelphia’s Verizon Hall before helping to inaugurate its new pipe organ with one of his compositions. He recently won a competitive Pew Fellowship in the Arts.

uninterrupted creative work until his next sabbatical leave, he says, “I expect to use this grant to support that leave. Also, I may have occasion to travel to France next summer for a performance at a festival and to work with the organist for whom I’m writing my next piece, and the Fellowship may support that trip as well.”

—Carol Brévarat-Demm

## POTTER AND PENN: QUAKER SYMPATHIES?

When Christopher Densmore, curator of the Friends Historical Library, opened the new and final volume of J.K. Rowling’s saga *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*, he found the narrative preceded by two quotations—one from Aeschylus and the other from that arch-Quaker, William Penn (1644–1718).

“The idea that even a little bit of William Penn’s writing was being disseminated with millions of copies of the latest Harry Potter book is gratifying,” wrote Densmore in an e-mail to the campus community in July. He continued:

“The quotation ‘Death is but crossing the world, as friends do the seas’ is from Penn’s *More Fruits of Solitude* (1702), a book of aphorisms that was a sequel to his earlier *Fruits of Solitude* (1693). The two works have been reprinted many times in the past three centuries. They were even included in the first volume of the Harvard Classics



along with the journals of Benjamin Franklin (1706–1790) and (Quaker) John Woolman (1720–1772).

“Although Harry Potter literally (if one can use that term for a fictional character) takes up the sword, where the Quaker William Penn (figuratively) put down the sword, there seems to be much in the ethical positions of Potter and Penn that would seem to be in sympathy, such as: ‘A good end cannot sanctify evil means; nor must we ever do evil, that good may come of it’ (*Fruits*, 537) and ‘Force may subdue, but love gains.’” (*Fruits*, 546).

“The full text of Penn’s books are, of course, available at Friends Historical Library, but the text is still in print (I recommend the edition that is included with Penn’s *Peace of Europe*) and also on-line.”

—Jeffrey Lott

# Handel, Messiah, and the Jews



GETTY IMAGES

GEORGE FRIDERIC HANDEL'S MOST FAMOUS WORK CAN BE SEEN AS PART OF A RELIGIOUS BACKLASH AGAINST JEWS AND OTHER "NONBELIEVERS."

By Michael Marissen, Daniel Underhill Professor of Music

subjects (such as *Israel in Egypt*) he was pro-Jewish. Handel and his contemporaries did have a high opinion of the characters populating the Hebrew Bible, not as "Jews" but rather as proto-Christian believers in God's expected Messiah, Jesus. On the subject of living Jews and Judaism after the advent of Jesus, contemporary English sources have virtually nothing positive to say and very little that is even neutral.

To create the libretto for Handel's *Messiah*, Charles Jennens (1701–1773), a formidable scholar and a friend of the composer, brought together a series of scriptural passages adapted from the *Book of Common Prayer* and the *King James Bible*.

As a traditionalist Christian, Jennens was troubled by the spread of deism—the notion that God had simply created the cosmos and let it run its course without divine intervention. Christianity rested on the (biblical) belief that God broke into history by taking human form in Jesus. For Jennens and his ilk, deism represented a serious menace.

Deists argued that Jesus was neither the son of God nor the messiah. Since Christian writers had habitually considered Jews the

most grievous enemies of their religion, they came to suppose that deists obtained anti-Christian ammunition from rabbinical scholars. Anglican Bishop Richard Kidder (1633–1703), for example, claimed in his huge 1690s treatise on Jesus as messiah that "the [d]eists among us, who would run down our revealed religion, are but underworkmen to the Jews."

Kidder's title bespeaks it all: "A Demonstration of the Messiah, in Which the Truth of the Christian Religion Is Proved, Against All the Enemies Thereof; but Especially Against the Jews." Jennens owned an edition from 1726, and he appears to have studied it carefully.

Central to Kidder's traditional Christianity is a mode of interpretation called "typology," which means that events in the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament) point to events in Christian history not only through explicit prophecy and fulfillment but also through the more mysterious implied spiritual anticipation of Christian "antitypes" in Old Testament "types."

In Romans 5:14, for example, the Apostle Paul describes Adam as a type of "the one to come" (Jesus, the antitype).

Such thinking was the driving force behind Kidder's book and Jennens's choice and juxtaposition of texts for his libretto. In *Messiah*, Old and New Testament selections stand fundamentally in a typological alignment.

Jennens saw that he could not thwart his adversaries simply by producing reading matter insisting that biblical texts be understood both typologically and as Christ-centered. What better means to comfort disquieted Christians against the faith-busting wiles of deists and Jews than to draw on the feelings and emotions of musical art—over and above the reasons and revelations of verbal argument?

Music lovers accustomed to gathering for December sing-alongs may be surprised to learn that George Frideric Handel's *Messiah* was meant not for Christmas but for Lent, and that the "Hallelujah" chorus was designed not to honor the birth of Jesus but to celebrate the destruction of Jerusalem and the Second Temple in 70 CE. For most Christians, this violent event was construed as divine retribution on Judaism for its failure to accept Jesus as messiah.

Although many Handel scholars claim that significant numbers of Jews attended the original performances of Handel's oratorios (1732–1751), they can offer no compelling evidence. Most Jews in 18th-century England were too poor to attend such concerts, and observant Jews would have balked at the public utterance of the sacred name of God in the oratorios, even though "Jehovah" was a Christian misunderstanding of the Lord's prohibited name.

Scholars often assert, too, that because Handel wrote oratorios on ancient Israelite

Editor's Note: "Faculty Expert" is a new department of the *Bulletin* that will focus on faculty scholarship and research at Swarthmore. In each issue, we will bring you articles written by faculty members as they pursue new knowledge and bring it to the College's classrooms and labs. We invite your comments—scholarly or otherwise—on these articles.



*Messiah* does exactly this, culminating in the “Hallelujah” chorus. At Scene 6 in Part 2, the oratorio features passages from Psalm 2 of the Old Testament set as a series of antagonistic movements that precede excerpts from the New Testament’s Book of Revelation set as the triumphant “Hallelujah” chorus: type and antitype, prophecy and fulfillment.

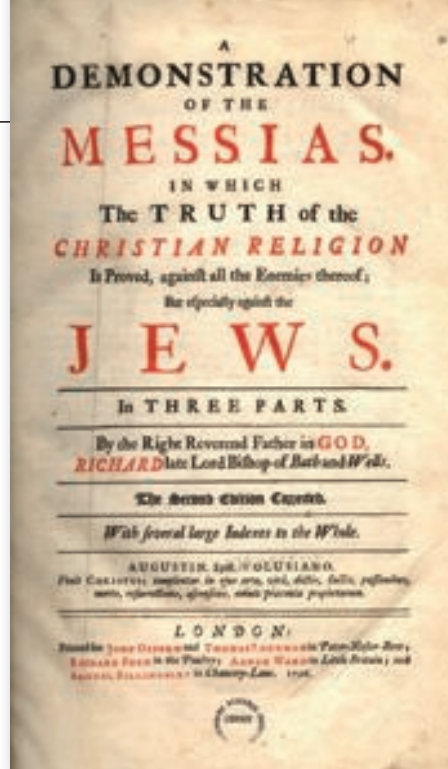
The bass aria that opens Scene 6 asks, “Why do the nations so furiously rage together, and why do the people imagine a vain thing?” But in the standard biblical sources, the passage (Psalm 2:1) reads not “nations” but “heathen.”

Jennens took his reading from Henry Hammond (1605–1660), the great 17th-century Anglican biblical scholar, whose extended and fiercely erudite commentary on Psalm 2 suggests the advantage of “nations” over “heathen”: “nations” can readily include the Jews. In the 18th century, no one would have uncritically used the *King James Bible* and the *Book of Common Prayer’s* word “heathen” for Jews or Judaism.

Handel sets Psalm 2:1 as an aria drawing on the *stile concitato* (agitated style), with repeated 16th notes as a convention for violent affects to underline the raging of the nations, pointedly including the Jews. “The people,” when they “imagine a vain thing,” are further associated with a conspicuous violin line of oscillating pitches.

A similar melodic idea depicts the Jews in the earlier recitative “All they that see him laugh him to scorn; they shoot out their lips, and shake their heads.” The recitative sets Psalm 22:7—a text that can be understood (typologically) to foreshadow a New Testament passage, Matthew 27:39–40, which refers to Jewish pilgrims attending Passover and to Jesus on the cross: “They that passed by, reviled him, wagging their heads.” The oscillating pattern and its scornful tone capture the Jews’ rejection of Jesus as messiah.

Later in Scene 6, at the tenor aria, Jennens skips to Psalm 2:9, “Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron.” His excision of verses 5–8 makes the violent language in “Thou shalt break them” refer to the Jesus-rejecting Jews, because without the intervening verses, “them” refers to “the nations” (including the Jews) and “the people” (the Jews) of the bass aria, rather than the gentiles referred to in the missing verse 8.



Anglican bishop Richard Kidder's 1690's treatise on Jesus as messiah was a diatribe against Jews and their “underworkmen,” the deists. Charles Jennens, who wrote the libretto for Handel's *Messiah*, owned and studied this 1726 edition.

If Jews are understood to make up “them,” who does “thou” refer to? Contemporary commentators widely agree it was the resurrected Jesus, who unleashed his anger on the Jews by having the Roman armies lay waste Jerusalem and its temple in 70 CE.

Indeed, Christians were all but unanimous in believing that the violence of Psalm 2:9 represented the prophesying type for a later event: the destruction of Jerusalem and its temple, the fulfilling antitype.

Now having brought in Psalm 2 and its understood prophecy of the destruction of the temple—widely believed to signal God's rejection of Judaism—what is Jennens's response? “Hallelujah! for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth; the kingdom of this world is become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ” (Revelation 19:6, 19:16, and 11:5).

Jennens undoubtedly got the idea of juxtaposing these passages directly from Hammond, who wrote: “Now at Revelation 11 is fulfilled that prophecy of Psalm 2. The Jewish nation have behaved themselves most stubbornly against Christ, and cruelly against Christians, and God's judgments are come upon them.”

Handel's music makes its own contribu-

tion to the theological message here. The mood of the “Hallelujah” chorus is over-the-top triumph. For the first time in *Messiah*, trumpets and drums are used together, although they would have been appropriate or welcome at several earlier places. In Baroque music, trumpets with drums were emblems of great power and of victory. In *Messiah*, the combination is saved for celebrating the destruction of Christ's crucifixion-provoking “enemies” prefigured in Psalm 2.

With Old Israel supposedly rejected by God and its obsolescence long before ensured, why did 18th-century writers and composers rejoice against Judaism at all, whether explicitly or, as here, implicitly? There must have been some festering Christian anxiety about the prolonged survival of Judaism: how could a “false” religion last? Might Judaism somehow actually be “true”?

These issues were a matter of life and death, says Jennens's key guide, Kidder: “If we be wrong in dispute with the Jews, we err fundamentally and must never hope for salvation. So that either we or the Jews must be in a state of damnation. Of such great importance are those matters in dispute between us and them.”

This would represent ample motivation for the text and musical setting of *Messiah* to engage these issues and would perhaps help explain any lapse from decent Christian gratitude into unseemly rejoicing in the “Hallelujah” chorus.

While still a timely, living masterpiece that may continue to bring spiritual and aesthetic sustenance to many music lovers, Christian or otherwise, *Messiah* also appears to be very much a work of its own era. ♫

*Michael Marissen received a B.A. from Calvin College and Ph.D. from Brandeis University, joining the Swarthmore faculty in 1989. He teaches courses on medieval, renaissance, baroque, and classical European music; Bach; a conceptual introduction to the music of various cultures; Mozart; and the string quartet. He is the author of Lutheranism, Anti-Judaism, and Bach's “St. John Passion” (Oxford University Press, 1998) and The Social and Religious Designs of J. S. Bach's “Brandenburg Concertos” (Princeton University Press, 1999). He is currently writing a monograph, Handel's “Messiah” and Christian Triumphalism. A different version of this essay appeared in The New York Times on April 8.*



# Brushes All Sticky With Words

ALEXANDRA GRANT '94 USES ART  
TO CREATE HER OWN SPECIAL  
MOTHER TONGUE.

By Carol Brévarit-Demm

In Alexandra Grant's 1999 painting *Palimpsest*, chains of words written backwards in pale orange balloons drift on clouds in shades of pink. Behind them, other reversed-word balloons hover, some partially or completely erased, hinting at a former existence. The layers interconnect in a mysterious collaboration of text, pattern, and color. Stretching over a 72 by 66-inch canvas, *Palimpsest* was a forerunner of works currently being shown in the exhibit *MOCA Focus: Alexandra Grant* at the Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art, Grant's first solo show. All the works testify to her preoccupation with language. All are large—high and wide—and their depth seems infinite.

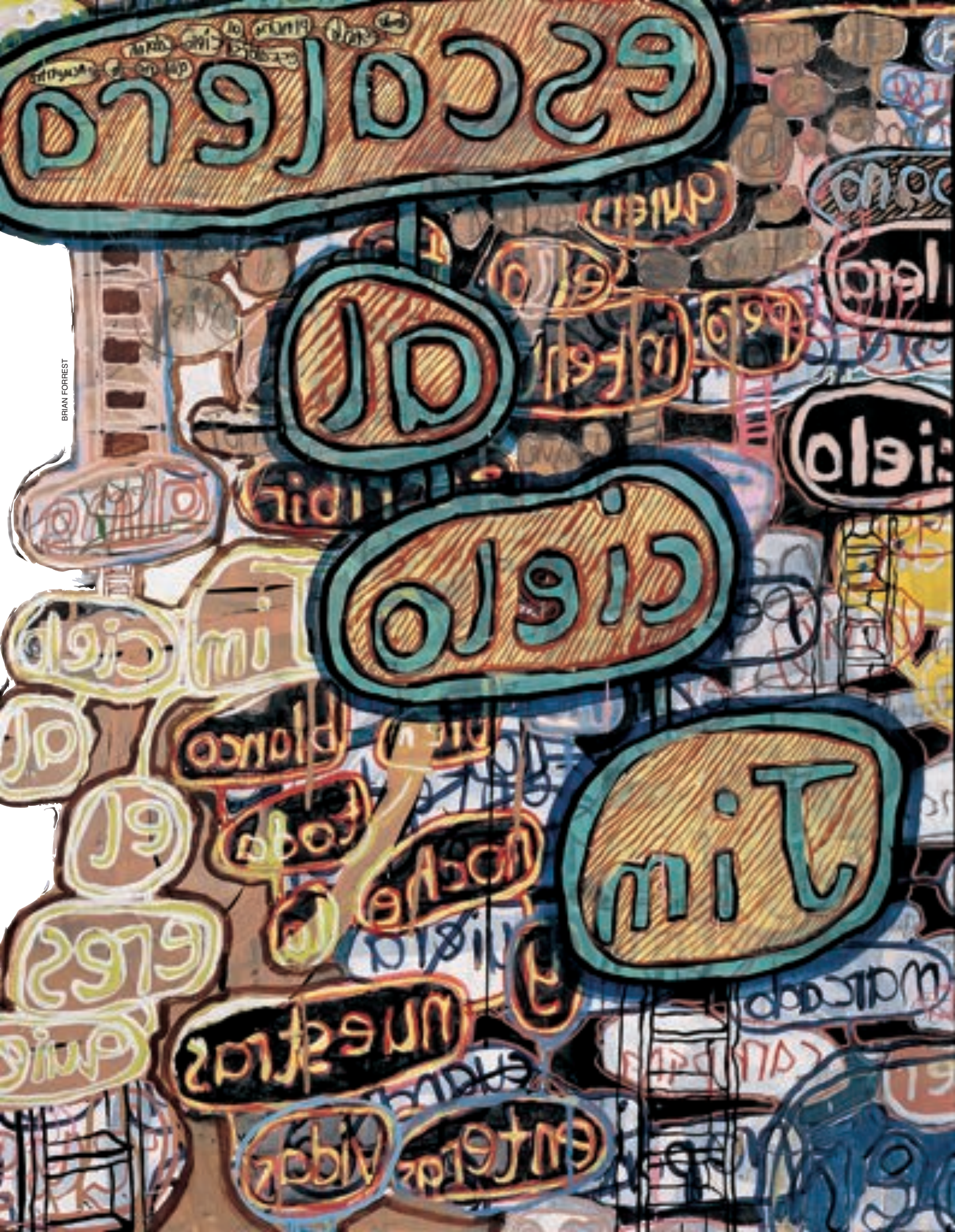
Grant is the daughter of former political science professor and American foreign-service officer Marcia Montin Grant '60, H'07 and the late Norman

Grant, a Scottish geology professor. The couple divorced when Alexandra was quite young, and she spent a large part of her childhood in Mexico City, where her mother was stationed. As a girl, she thought of herself as Mexican, speaking Spanish in response to her mother's Eng-

lish. The cosmopolitan student body of the British school she attended exposed her to families of many other nationalities. At age 11, Grant spent a year in boarding school in St. Louis, Mo., while her mother was learning French at the Foreign Service Institute in preparation for a stint in France. Then, moving to Paris to be with her mother, she spent two years mingling with the children of foreign diplomats at the International School in Paris. Fluent in Spanish, French, and English, she possesses what she calls a "hyperawareness" of language and the problems inherent in translation—of "what is gained or lost or misunderstood," as meanings are transposed from one language into another.

"Being raised in a society that's different linguistically and culturally than the one you're from, than the one your parents are from, you search for a way to make sense of it," Grant says. "The urge to write is there, to create a language, to tell a story of what you really understand. Because I was brought up moving and experiencing so much by the age of 14, the only way I believed I could make sense of the experience was to do something creative with it."

Grant grew up immersed in fine arts—in her home, during frequent visits to museums and archaeological sites, and at concerts. Her mother was an avid art collec-



BRIAN FORREST



ROBERT WEIDMEYER

"All my interests are about language and story-telling and voices, but ultimately, I sought a greater challenge—to think about issues of writing and linguistic theory in terms of art,

and how I could show that," Grant says. In *Palimpsest* (above, 1999), word balloons hover, some partially or completely erased, hinting at a former existence.



BRIAN FORREST



COURTESY OF ALEXANDRA GRANT



BRIAN FORREST

tor. “She’d bring interesting objects home all the time,” Grant says. “She’d come back from a business trip with a giant wooden dragon under her arm. She figured out how to buy artwork and crafts on a very limited professor’s budget. She just had a sense that it was important—like having a piano.”

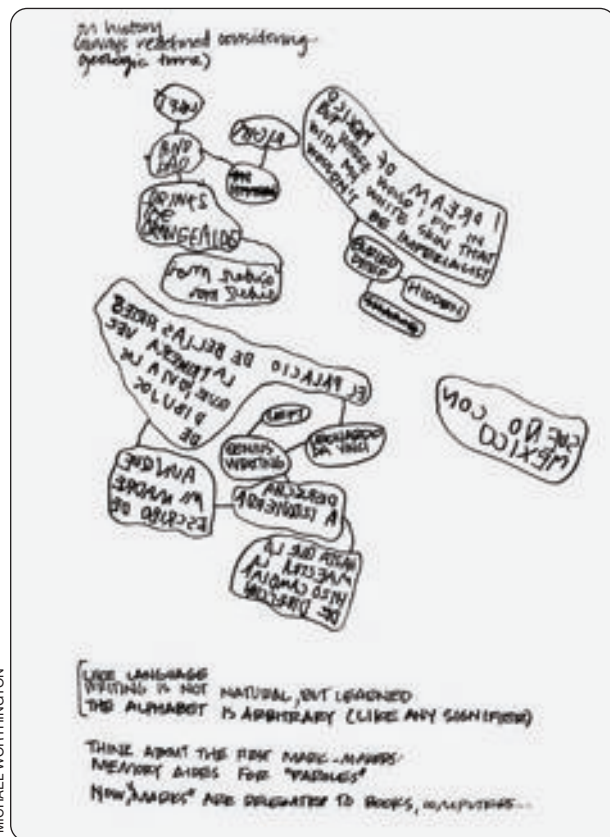
In 1998, after a semester at the California College of Arts and Crafts in San Francisco, during which she had started to “map out text into chains of words”—the “bubble poems” that define many of her works such as *Palimpsest*—Grant took a leave of absence from school to try to identify what she had to say as a woman, artist, and American. She immersed herself in the writings and poetry of

**“Being raised in a society that’s different linguistically and culturally than the one you’re from, you search for a way to make sense of it . . . to tell a story of what you really understand.”**

authors and philosophers including Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault, Maxine Hong Kingston, Clarice Lispector, and Karl Marx, keeping detailed notes—many also in the form of word chains—as she read. She felt a particular affinity to feminist linguistic theorist, philosopher, and author Hélène Cixous, who, born in Algeria of an Austro-German-Jewish mother and Algerian Sephardic father, was raised speaking German. Cixous emigrated to France as a young adult, where she obtained degrees in English literature and became a writer of fictional, poetic, and theoretical works in both English and French. Her 1993 book *Three Steps on the Ladder of Writing*

Since 2003, Grant (*center, right*) has collaborated with hyper-text novelist Michael Joyce (*center, left*). Four of his poems inspired the paintings in Grant’s *Ladder Quartet*; three are seen here (*left to right*): *let’s* (after Joyce’s “Ladders, 2004”); *contender* (after “Contend, 2004”)—a detail of which is seen on page 17; and *she taking her space* (after “he taking the space of, 2004”).

Grant kept a visual journal (*below*) during a leave from the California College of Arts and Crafts, as she sought to identify what she had to say as a woman, artist, and American.



MICHAEL WORTHINGTON

inspired Grant to “dream about creating my own ‘mother tongue’” in art and was the starting point for Grant’s *Ladder Quartet*, one of the central features of the MOCA exhibit.

If Grant had not had the itch to be tactile, she would probably have been a writer, she says. “All my interests are about language and story-telling and voices, but ultimately—and I guess this is where Swarthmore kicks in—I sought a greater challenge, to think about issues of writing and linguistic theory in terms of art, and how I could show that.” During her period of reading and note-taking, she stumbled upon the idea of text as image and image as text, investigating what she calls “that liminal place where a word becomes an image of a word. I understood that that seam would be one I could mine for a long time,” she says.

Initially struggling with completely committing to being a visual artist, Grant contemplated a Ph.D. in architectural theory and enrolled in Princeton’s School of Architecture. “I thought of architecture as an interdisciplinary field where I could draw and articulate ideas about design and theory and think about the way people move through different spaces—ideally it has all these pieces under one roof. However, in my case, I realized that, confronted with the real struggles of an architecture practice such as coming into contact with certain limitations because of my sex and the demands of entry level jobs, being under that roof would limit what I could engage,” she says. “I saw that I needed to take my ideas outside of a predetermined career path and the limits of an institution. I knew I had to function independently as an artist.”

For a while, she worked as a consultant for La Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros in New York City but moved to Los Angeles in 2001 to focus on her art work. Although she used texts from her journals for some smaller works, she later turned to the poetry she

found while reading widely. “There’s such an inherent awareness of how to keep language alive in poetry, which is why I chose it as a literary form, and, as I’m visually mapping the text, there has to be a sense of structural cadence to it.” She created one of her earliest works by riffing off Polish Nobel Laureate Wislawa Szymborska’s poem “Possibilities.” The fact that the poem had been translated into English from Polish fed into Grant’s interest in the transformation of language through translation. Mapping the text by forming words inside bubbles made from thin black wire, the first two lines of the poem “I prefer” became the central point around which strands of poetry created a heliocentric shape. Suspended from the ceiling, like a “spider web of language,” the sculpture cast a shadow on the wall behind it, which Grant traced over with a pencil. How far apart or close to each other are Szymborska and Grant—and does it really matter? As Grant’s drawing echoes shadow echoing sculpture echoing translated text echoing original poem, material and immaterial, reality and mystery intermingle. The sculpture, titled *I prefer, drawing without paper (after Wislawa Szymborska)* was created for the 2002 exhibit *unDRAWN: Unusual Approaches to Drawing at the Brewery Project in Los Angeles*.

After years working with “found poetry” in her drawings, paintings, and sculptures, Grant wished for a closer collaboration with a working poet. In 2003, quite by chance, while researching for a curatorial project on-line, she discovered a hypertext piece that, she says,

**Rather than succumb to galleries’ demands for many small, easy-to-produce works, Grant says, “My response was to double the size, go the opposite direction, push the bounds.”**



BRIAN FORREST

“was so beautiful, I knew immediately that this was the language I wanted to work with.” She traced the text to Michael Joyce, a poet and professor of English literature at Vassar College and the “grandfather of hypertext fiction.” Grant wrote to him and requested his permission to use his work—titled *Reach*—for one of her drawings in wire. Within days, he replied, delighted to work with Grant. Looking at the work—a wire, word-web sculpture hung above a piece of paper, on which she had traced the shadows cast by the sculpture to form topographic lines and create a landscape of language—Joyce recognized a parallel to his own intentions with language.

“As one of the first hypertext novelists of the 1980s and 1990s, his goal was to democratize language, to make it nonlinear, decentralize the central narrator,” Grant says. “This was exactly what I was trying to do visually, and we found each other just because I recognized a quality in his language.”

Grant believes that her true success as an artist began when she found Joyce, “because I was really able to start engaging all these ideas I was interested in—from linguistic theory to international understanding, to language and mark making, everything poetic, yet everything concrete,” she says. “Here was another person with a practice who was willing to meet me as an equal.” Although her works at that time, 20-foot spider webs of language, were so huge that they could not be moved and so were virtually uncollectible, she says, “I really thought I’d made it when I found this partnership. I’d found my dream audience.”

Grant and Joyce work together not only as artists but also as scholars; they have delivered joint lectures at Notre Dame University and California Institute of the Arts in Valencia.

Their finding each other appears to have been all the more predestined by the fact that Joyce is well-acquainted with Hélène Cixous, who wrote the afterword for one of his books. Joyce arranged a meeting between Grant and Cixous in Paris, and Cixous has since visited Grant’s studio in Los Angeles. “When Hélène was in my studio last year, I was aware that she was there because I had engaged her and her ideas through what I was making—that my artwork had generated her presence,” Grant says.

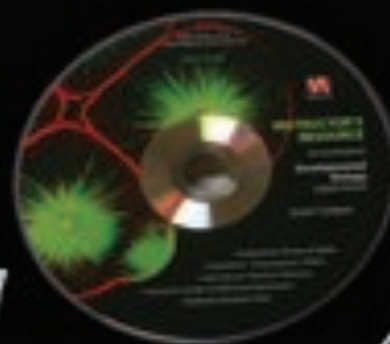
The MOCA exhibit contains many of Grant’s works created in collaboration with Joyce. “How it works,” Grant says, “is that I’ll have an idea, let’s say a silver-wire ball of text with a nimbus-like shape. My description of it will suggest 12 things to Michael, then he’ll compose a text. My translation of it won’t be a literal one. If there are parts I don’t like, I obliterate them, and that process of reacting to his text becomes part of the image or object. Michael is a very generous writer and as interested in collaboration as I am—he is open to his work being transformed. His texts are a gift of trust to me and may become whatever I choose to make them.”

Grant created *nimbus I* (after Michael Joyce’s “*Nimbus*”) in 2004. Similar to but more sophisticated than *I prefer*, the sculpture rotates, driven by a small motor, in marvelous suspension from the ceiling. As delicate wire chains of fleeting words cast ever-changing shadows on the nearby wall, the very nature of the work prevents the meaning of the language that has shaped it from being fully revealed.

The initial inspiration for Grant’s 2004 *Ladder Quartet* came from Cixous’ essay “The Last Painting or The Portrait of God,” in which Cixous describes herself as a writer “with brushes all sticky  
Please turn to page 79



At 22 feet across, *babel* (after Michael Joyce’s “*Was*, 2006”), is Grant’s most ambitious work to date. Now represented by the Honor Fraser Gallery in Venice, Calif., she anticipates a long career as an artist.





# Beyond the Book

TEXTBOOK PUBLISHERS—AND AUTHORS LIKE SWARTHMORE'S SCOTT GILBERT—GET CREATIVE TO STAY AFLOAT.

By Carol Brévarit-Demm

Visitors to the Swarthmore College Bookstore cannot help but be enticed by the bright displays covering the sales floor—attractive baskets, bags, jewelry, and scarves, handmade by artisans—from “World of Good.” “Witty gifts for funny people,” including mints, mugs, finger puppets, and watches, from the “Unemployed Philosophers Guild” figure prominently, as do “beautiful prisms” that catch the sun and cast dancing rainbows all around. A “large selection of gifts under \$2,” including kazooes, whistles, bubbles, and puzzles is available to tempt the thrifty. Swarthmore garb invites the campus fashion conscious. But wait— isn’t this a bookstore?

OK, tables of books are scattered among the other goods, and bookshelves cover two walls, but these are not the eye-catchers. The bookstore displays send a clear message about the store’s current selling power—and it isn’t in books. According to bookstore manager Kathy Grace, some of the profits from general merchandise are being used this year to offset the decline in sales of textbooks and other course materials.

As teachers and students turn to the more dynamic—and less costly—information providers on the Web, the traditional textbook has relinquished some of its sovereign status as the defining feature of college and school curricula.

Struggling to remain competitive, the textbook publishing industry is developing all kinds of ancillaries, for both teachers and students, to accompany the books—manu-



ELEFTHERIOS KOSTANS

Bookstore manager Kathy Grace uses profits from general merchandise to offset the decline in textbook sales.

als, videos, PowerPoint options, study guides, Web resources, and other items—all of which add to the publishing cost and hence the retail price of the book.

Grace questions the extent to which the student or teacher uses all of the extras. “The publishers are doing all they can to get students to buy new books by creating these bundles, and if the components of the bundles are being used, that’s great, and it’s wonderful value; if it’s not, then it’s wasted. Although the publishers say it’s free, the students know there is cost associated with it, and that aggravates them,” she says.

Due to variables like changes in the total student population, course offerings, and course enrollment from year to year, there is



Professor of Biology Scott Gilbert sees *Developmental Biology* as the starting point of a whole learning module that college biology students receive. He was one of the first authors to embed in a textbook Web references to a site specifically designed for a textbook.

no accurate method of obtaining reliable figures to reflect changes in textbook sales, but publishers, authors, and both new- and used-book retailers alike say that their sales figures have been declining.

Nonetheless, not all traditional textbooks have gone the way of the dinosaur and the slide rule. For an example of a textbook that has been successful over time and managed to thrive on the changes of the last two decades, one need only look to the College's Biology Department. Scott Gilbert's *Developmental Biology*, first published in 1985, has evolved with the industry to become almost unrecognizably different from its earliest editions.

The idea for *Developmental Biology* germinated in the late 1970s, when the study of how organisms grow and develop was undergoing rapid change. Existing textbooks focused either on molecular development or on anatomical development, but no work was available to bridge the gap. Sensing a growing dissatisfaction among young biologists entering the field, publisher Sinauer Associates asked Professor David Sonneborn of the University of Wisconsin at Madison to write a new book that combined the two approaches.

Sonneborn declined the assignment but suggested instead a young postdoctoral researcher who had just accepted a position at Swarthmore College. Apparently, Scott Gilbert was among those who had been griping about not having just such a book to teach from. "The idea was that I should either put up or shut up," says Gilbert, now the College's Howard A. Schneiderman Professor of Biology. Gilbert says the publisher told him, "If you think a book is needed, try writing one."

Gilbert's brown eyes twinkle, and his boyish face radiates all the delight of a proud father as he speaks of the birth of *Developmental Biology*: "I was very glad I wrote it then, because those were pivotal years for the transition of the field into what we now know as developmental biology. I kind of caught the wave."

The wave is still rising. The book celebrated its 21st anniversary last year with the publication of its eighth edition. "It filled a need," Gilbert says, adding that some other biologists had also started to write books but dropped them when his appeared.

Gilbert says that triennial editions are essential to keep pace with the frequent and

sometimes sudden discoveries in the field: "It used to be the case that a biology book could last for 7 to 8 years without being reissued, but that is no longer true." He is grateful for his collaboration with Sinauer, an author-centered publishing house that permits changes to the book until the day the disks are sent to the printer.

"We had to do that when Dolly was cloned," Gilbert says, recalling the final days of preparation for the fifth edition in February 1997. "The text would have read something like, 'No mammal has been cloned.'" Because the book had already been paginated when news of the cloning broke, Gilbert had to make a character-for-character change, taking out exactly as many characters as he put in.

Throughout its evolution, *Developmental Biology*—by now much more than simply a book—has been quite a community effort. Gilbert has received assistance from students, alumni, and other College employees with typing, first onto paper and later on computers; with proof-reading, editing, and writing; and, more recently, with Web-site creation. [See p. 27.]

TODAY'S *DEVELOPMENTAL BIOLOGY*, GILBERT says, is the result of three revolutions in science-textbook-publishing during the last 25 years.

First and foremost has been the revolution of content. "The whole structure of the book has changed," Gilbert says. "We now have whole chapters on things that didn't exist in 1985, such as medical embryology, cloning, regeneration research, and stem cells. We have a chapter on plant development, which hadn't been studied on a molecular basis in 1980. When I first wrote the book, the three basic paradigms that are now central to developmental biology—paracrine factors, transcription factors, and signal transduction pathways—were unknown."

The second revolution has been one of production and printing—the physical creation of books. In the early 1980s, "a world ago," says Gilbert, the book was handwritten. Seeking someone to type it, he found Diane Stasiunas, a new employee in "Steno" (now known as Office Services). "Being new and nervous, I was anxious to make a good impression," Stasiunas says. "But the book was very interesting, and I looked forward to each chapter as Scott brought it to me."



ALAN DIXON '83

Biologist Scott Gilbert (above, ca. 1982) published the first edition of *Developmental Biology* in 1985. To keep pace with frequent discoveries in the field of biology, Gilbert says, triennial editions are essential.

"I'd take the typed versions and suggest corrections, then give it back to Diane, who would type it again," Gilbert explains. "I'd send it to the publisher, the publisher would review it, and then Diane retyped it yet again."

"He credits me at the front of the book, which I thought was a wonderful gesture," Stasiunas says.

The third revolution was one of graphics. In 1984, faxes were a novelty, Federal Express a rarely used luxury, e-mail did not exist, and nobody talked of pixels per inch, Gilbert says. Early editions of the book required actual photographs and drawings on loan from scientific journals and other researchers. Drawings were done with pen and ink by artists who made corrections with Wite Out or mechanical erasers.

"Now, we can get state-of-the-art high-resolution digital color images—sent to us usually the same day I request them," Gilbert says, his eyes widening, seeming hardly able to believe it himself. "So the thing now is that not only have the standards changed but the ability to meet the



Internet grew into an information and communications conduit, gradually, a Web site, CD-ROM disks containing all figures in the book, and a DVD were added to *Developmental Biology*. If bought as a “bundle” with the book, a new supplement on bioethics can be had at cost.

The visually attractive book, with 785 pages and 752 illustrations, displays on its cover a micrograph of a vividly colored zebrafish (*Danio rerio*), an ideal subject for the study of cell movement because its transparent embryo develops quickly and occurs outside a uterus or eggshell. The easy-to-navigate pages are bright with abundant colored drawings, diagrams, and photographs. Small, colored boxes guide readers to Web sites.

As the complexity of the book has increased, so has its price—from \$33.95 for the first edition in 1985 to \$112.50 for the most recent one, reflecting an inflation-adjusted 100 percent increase. On the other hand, the bioethics supplement, which costs \$14.95 alone, was offered free by the publisher last year to all who purchased the textbook.

Gilbert points out that the used-book market also affects the price of new textbooks. Because neither author nor publisher receives money for resold copies, their profits are

made for the most part in the first year of sales.

New copies of *Developmental Biology*, of which the College Bookstore has sold 54 copies since 2003, can be purchased in Europe for between \$86 and \$100 plus shipping.

TEXTBOOK RETAILERS ARE CONCERNED THAT American publishers are increasingly selling their books to overseas markets at substantially lower prices, claiming reasons such as the need to sell “to market” or that the United States is their market and all other sales are mere “gravy.” One student who requested anonymity said that he obtained an unused math textbook from India for \$12 instead of the \$80 he would have paid in this country.

“Students can surf the Web and see the very same books at lower prices,” Grace says. “If they can buy a book for \$50 in a European country or on amazon.uk that

was written and printed in the United States and I’m selling it at \$100, they think I must have paid maybe \$30 for it, if the U.K. can sell it at \$50—but, in fact, I paid \$80 for it. The students get the impression they’re being ripped off, which makes them not want to buy these materials—and I wouldn’t either.” Publishers are also trying to boost their sales by selling directly to students at lower than retail prices, further impacting bookstore sales.

Charlie Stasiunas, assistant supervisor of the College post office and former bookstore employee, has experienced the textbook market in both of his jobs at Swarthmore. He says that during his tenure at the bookstore, boxes of books that had been ordered by faculty members for courses were often sent back to the publisher because students had bought them more cheaply elsewhere. Now, he says: “At the beginning of every semester, the post office is inundated with big boxes of book orders coming in from amazon.com.”

A thriving peer-to-peer market on Internet sites such as eBay is also taking its toll on the publishing and textbook retail businesses. “Of course,” Grace jokes, “the students need packaging to send off the items they are selling, so they’re buying lots more padded envelopes from us.

“We want the course material department to break even,” Grace says. “The store does make money; we contribute money back to the College budget, but we divide the store into two sections: one is for course materials, the other for everything else. The money we contribute to the College comes from the latter section, the T-shirts and sweatshirts, the mugs and other appealing items.”

Grace says that the Swarthmore store charges much less for College apparel and other memorabilia than other colleges’ stores, and, according to Grace, its prices for similar items compared favorably with Walmart’s prices in a *Philadelphia Inquirer* article.

As booksellers are forced to confront falling sales in the face of rising book prices, some faculty members, concerned that their students must regularly spend up to \$500 each semester on books, are seeking less costly alternatives to the increasingly costly textbooks. Many place articles and books on reserve in the College libraries. Others write their own books and post them on the Web.

Professor of Mathematics Charles Grin-

standards has also changed. It’s a kind of reciprocal thing—you can do it, so you’d better do it.”

Gilbert has definitely been doing it. The 1985 edition comprised 680 pages with 567 illustrations; except for the cover, it was published in black and white, and it included no supplements. Preparing the book for reissue in 1988, Gilbert enlisted three young alumni to input the text onto the still relatively new personal computer, so that he could edit it on screen.

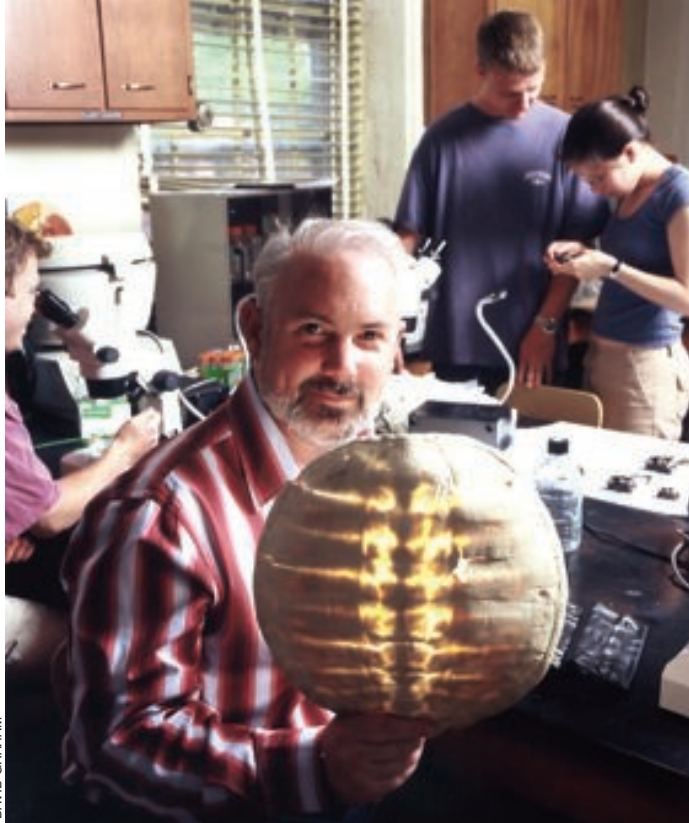
“It was amazing how many details needed to be updated—numbers, dates, whole sections had to be changed or added,” says Lisa Lee ’81, currently director of alumni relations, who typed at Gilbert’s home while babysitting his two oldest children.

Further changes from edition to edition included two-color, then four-color printing, a supplemental lab manual, overhead transparencies, and VHS videos. As the

stead and J. Laurie Snell of Dartmouth College have co-written *Introduction to Probability*, the second edition of a book Snell wrote 20 years ago. Published by the American Mathematical Society, it is available in hard copy and—at the insistence of the authors—is downloadable from the Web at no charge. Grinstead says: “Our publisher wasn’t thrilled about it at first, but they’re still selling hard copies, so I think they’re happy with it now.” The book sells for \$50. “This is very low for a textbook,” Grinstead says. In his seminar, he uses academic articles on probability in addition to the main text. “Many of these are accessible on the Net, which I think is a big improvement over the situation even 15 years ago,” he says, adding, “The incredible increase in computing power over the past 30 years has certainly changed the way I teach a probability course.”

GILBERT SEES *DEVELOPMENTAL BIOLOGY* as the starting point of a whole learning module that college biology students receive. He was one of the first authors to embed in a textbook Web references to a site designed specifically for a textbook. Serving as a comprehensive companion to the textbook, [www.devbio.com](http://www.devbio.com) presents philosophical, ethical, and historical issues relating to developmental biology. Each book chapter contains numbered Web topics, accessible directly by typing the reference number from the book into the site’s home page.

Gilbert’s book differs from other developmental biology texts because of its historical content, which Gilbert believes is important to the study of developmental biology. “Aristotle worked on the heart,” he says. “William Harvey worked on the heart; all these great people tried to find out how the heart worked. You are invited to research this. Looking at the history, we show that developmental biology was done by a wide range of peoples in many different countries with many different perspectives. There’s no one way of being a developmental biologist. This is important for the students to know.”



DAVID GRAHAM

Today, Gilbert says that despite the wealth of Internet-based resources, “the students want something ‘hard’ to refer to.” Other faculty members agree—and some have written and published texts specifically tailored to their own courses.

Pointing out that all tables and diagrams containing data are accompanied by actual photographs of what the data represents, Gilbert says: “We want them to know that this is real stuff—these are photographs of real embryos, showing development occurring in real space and time. You can learn a tremendous amount from the pictures.

“In fact,” he adds, only half joking, “you can almost use this book as a picture book. If you go through the illustrations, you’ll know what the book says.”

He stresses the importance of the latest supplementary materials available with the book. In the current instructor’s edition, the supplemental DVD contains every figure in the book either as a free-standing figure or in PowerPoint format. Embedded in the PowerPoint option are more than 100 movies showing development. At the discretion of the teacher, Gilbert says, they may be shared with students via computer networks or by duplicating the DVD.

The students’ editions come equipped with a different DVD, a *vade mecum* or companion resource, that offers an interactive laboratory approach to developmental biology. Written by Mary Stott Tyler ’71, a biology professor at the University of Maine, it provides a basic introduction to each laborato-

ry, discussing the natural history and the developmental anatomy of the organisms usually worked on in developmental biology. She includes movies showing living organisms rather than the dead embryos typically used in most labs. “It’s phenomenal,” Gilbert says.

The most recent member of the *Developmental Biology* family resulted from Gilbert’s longtime interest and involvement in bioethics. While teaching a course on the history of biology, Gilbert asked students to identify seven areas where developmental biology came up against ethical issues in society. The students divided into groups of three and wrote papers on topics including cloning, stem cells, and genetic engineering. “Reading the papers, I realized that they made probably the best introduction to embryology

and bioethics I had ever seen,” Gilbert says. With help from Anna Tyler ’03 and Emily Zackin ’02, he set out to edit the compilation of papers into a book.

“We rewrote the students’ papers, added more to them, checked the references, and formatted the manuscript,” Gilbert says. *Bioethics and the New Embryology: Springboards for Debate* was published in 2005 and owns a section of the Web site. The book has received favorable reviews in *Nature*, *Bioessays*, and on *amazon.com*. “My hope is that instructors will add bioethics to their curricula,” Gilbert says.

WITH THE INTERNET REVOLUTION, the curricula of most math, science, and technology courses are no longer defined solely by textbooks. Now, without leaving their desks, students have the option of accessing information on-line and participating in interactive exercises provided by their teachers both on Blackboard (an interactive course management software package for faculty and students) and from other Internet sources. Students like the ease with which information can be found via computer yet, despite the rising costs, many still relish being able to handle a real textbook—on the couch or even in bed.



Gilbert says he does not foresee *Developmental Biology* becoming totally “etherized.” Although he believes it will become more and more the center of a complex of Internet-based resources, he says, “I think the students want something ‘hard’ that they can refer to.”

Professor and Chair of Mathematics Stephen Maurer '67, Grinstead, and their colleagues seem to be successfully combining the use of on-line and hard-copy materials for teaching and learning, profiting not only from interactive software such as Mathematica or Math Emporium but also from the relative ease with which faculty members, like Grinstead, can write their own textbooks, using downloadable publishing software, and release them for on-line public domain use.

Maurer compared two versions of a text used in one calculus course. It was available in the College bookstore in hard copy and in a lower-cost electronic version on-line.

“We checked with a few students to find out whether anyone was using the on-line version,” Maurer says. “They reported that they hadn’t found it very helpful because they’d only been able to look at a bit at a time. It’s also still true, at least of our students, that if it’s more than a few pages, they like to hold it in their hands.”

Meanwhile, Grinstead is delighted that his book is selling quite well in hard copy but also enjoying worldwide exposure via the Internet. “It’s really nice seeing e-mail from places like Hong Kong, Italy, Spain, Africa, and South America, saying things like, ‘I really like your book. I’d like to use it in a class I’m teaching.’” Two readers have expressed interest in translating the book, one into Italian and another into Catalan.

Maurer believes that the free download may even be increasing hard-copy sales of Grinstead’s book. “The apparent no-brainer—that everyone will download—isn’t actually true, because it’s really hard to use a 300-page book on screen.”

Despite his apparent success in bridging the gap between the real and the virtual textbook, Grinstead predicts that the existence of books in paper form will gradually diminish. “That doesn’t mean we won’t have libraries,” he says. “It’s just that in this day and age, people can write and print their own books, then publish them and have them on-line as well. It’s nice to have

them on-line so that people can decide whether they want to actually buy or just download a part of a book.”

AS IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT AND BOARD MEMBER of the National Association of College Stores, Grace attended a September meeting of college bookstore managers and textbook publishing representatives to discuss the future of the textbook publishing industry and its consequences for retailers. They reviewed issues including publishers sales prices to overseas retailers, book rental programs, digital content initiatives, direct publisher-to-student initiatives, and alternative textbook formats, such as e-books versus “no frills” paper editions, in an effort to create strategies for mutual support and cooperation.

Since the beginning of the 2006–2007 academic year, the bookstore has been selling digital versions of some textbooks. Through the Universal Textbook Program, publishers make some of their titles available digitally, and bookstores can decide at what price they will sell them to students.

“Essentially, the greater the discount at which you want to sell, the less the bookstore gets to keep,” Grace says. “We’re making the e-books available at 40 percent off, which leaves us about an 8-percent profit margin. Our usual retail margin for hard-copy textbooks is 20 percent, but we use that to pay to ship the books in here, pay someone to put them on the shelves, and pay someone to return any we don’t sell. And we have to pay for them up front and get credits. The digital books are paid for as they’re purchased, so there are far fewer costs associated with them.”

Despite the Internet revolution, faculty members, publishers, and students still currently believe that the printed textbook is central to most courses in the sciences, mathematics, and technology. But many anticipate that this will change over time.

Dean Scudder, vice president of Sinauer Associates, says: “We foresee little drop in printed textbook sales in the sciences in the next 5 years but expect e-texts to have an increasing impact down the road.” He adds that when the marketplace demands it, Sinauer will be prepared to offer its texts in a high-end electronic format.

And, if Grace and her staff have anything to do with it, the College Bookstore will be around to receive them. ☘

## A FAMILY AFFAIR

According to Scott Gilbert, *Developmental Biology*, which turned 21 last year, has been raised by a whole family of College community members. Gilbert credits the following nurturers for its successful birth, childhood, adolescence, and coming-of-age:

- Diane Stasiunas typed, retyped, and typed again the first edition from Gilbert’s handwritten pages.

- To facilitate Gilbert’s editing of the text in preparation for the second edition, young alumni Barry Datloff '83 and Rohit Mahajan '84 as well as Lisa Lee '81 typed the text onto a computer.

- The idea for the book’s Web site, [www.devbio.com](http://www.devbio.com), arose from Gilbert’s conversations with student Barbara Ley '94, who was interested in the roles of the Internet in education. Bradley Gabe '94 and Daniel Wells '95, with assistance from the Math Forum, helped launch this site as a wiki-type Gopher site in 1994, where scientists were asked to update the text. Heather Mateyak Bruemmer '97, a computer science student who had created her own Web site, reconfigured the site to the http format, and the URLs for this site were included in the fifth edition (1997).

- Mary Stott Tyler '71, author of the vade mecum, is not only an alumna but also daughter of Gilmore Stott, late associate provost emeritus and special assistant to the president.

- *Bioethics: Springboards for Debate* was edited by Anna Tyler '03, a doctoral student in the Molecular and Cellular Biology Department at Dartmouth College, and Emily Zackin '02, a political science major and honors biology minor while at the College and, currently, a doctoral student in Princeton University’s Politics Department.

- Gilbert’s students provided an endless stream of ideas and comments as well as proofreading and editing assistance.

# CARVED IN STONE

CLASS MOTTOES: MESSAGES FROM THE PAST

SILENT VOICES ECHO FROM MORE THAN A CENTURY OF GRADUATING CLASSES IN THE MOST PERMANENT MEDIUM DEvised BY HUMANS.

*By Jeffrey Lott*

*Rubbings by Isobel Rubin*

*Translations by Martin Ostwald,  
William R. Kenan Jr. Professor  
Emeritus of Classics*



With the Class of 1938, a Swarthmore tradition—the placement of stone mottoes in the walls of Parrish Hall seemed to die a wordless death. From our vantage point—almost 70 years later—1938 looked like the end of an era. That year, the graduating class chose only a number. One wonders, as the Depression dragged on and war approached, if members of that class couldn't find anything profound or inspirational to say. After 1938, there were no more mottoes.

Until two years ago, when a new graduating class spoke in stone once again:

“Goodwill,” the Class of 2005 cheerfully proclaimed, placing their “feeling of approval and support—benevolent interest or concern” (as described by Webster’s) right next to the dour silence of 1938. Perhaps it took the first class to attend Swarthmore entirely in the new century to give voice to comity and hope on the occasion of its Commencement.

Campus visitors can’t help but notice the mottoes on three sides of Parrish Hall and, we discovered, in two obscure spots on the Sproul Alumni Center, the former observatory. Silent voices echo from more than a


century of graduating classes in the most permanent medium devised by humans: They are carved in stone. The earliest, a high-relief, was mounted on Parrish in 1891: *Non Dicere, Sed Facere* (“Don’t Talk But Act”). For two decades, though not in every year, classes chose elaborate carvings that sported phrases in Latin or Greek, often entwined with the class year and the letters “SC.” The first stone entirely in English came in 1919: “Carry On.”

In translation, most of the the Greek and Latin mottoes tout what Professor Emeritus of Economics Frederic Pryor classifies as



1919

CARRY ON



GOODWILL



1932

AMAT VICTORIA

CURAM

"Goodwill," placed by the Class of 2005, was the first new class motto added to the walls of Parrish Hall since 1938. After decades of Greek and Latin inscriptions, the first motto in English was "Carry On" (1919). Just one stone is in German: "Vorwärts" (1894).



Although no one can truly know the minds of graduating classes a century ago, it's fun to speculate on the relationship between their messages and the events of their time.

“character development,” phrases such as πόνω πάνπα—1893 (“All Things by Means of Effort”), ἦθος ἀνθρώπων δαίμων—1898 (“Character is Man’s Leading Spirit”), and *A Posse Ad Esse*—1904 (“From Ability to Being”).

Pryor posits two additional classifications: celebratory and pessimistic. Ever the economist, he tries to correlate the three types of mottos against the percentage change in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) during the four years that each class attended college. He points to the exuberant 1929 motto “On and Ever On,” which reflects “the go-go spirit of those times,” but four years later, the Class of 1933’s “Courage and Patience” shows “a reversal of that atti-

tude.” (The GDP dropped 41.34 percent in the preceding four years.)

Mottos also reflect the advent of the nation’s wars. Consider 1900, after the Spanish-American War, when Quakers (the College was still largely Quaker at that time) might well say *Nil Desperandum* (“Do Not Despair”). Or the Wilsonian ring to the 1918 motto: *Non Nobis Per Omnibus* (“Not For Us, But For All”), followed by 1919’s more sanguine “Carry On”—the first motto in English. It’s a pity that the Class of 1942 didn’t carve a phrase in stone. Or the Class of 1969. One can only wonder what wisdom they might have left us.

On campus, everyone has a favorite inscription. Mine is just outside the East

entrance to Parrish: “Use Well Thy Freedom” (1927). It rings true 80 years after the stone was set there by classmates who have all but disappeared. Other great mottos from this golden age of aphorisms include “Stand for Truth” (1928), “Dare to be Wise” (1931), and the final Latin inscription *Amat Victoria Curam* (literally, “Victory Loves Care,” but more commonly “Victory Favors Those Who Take Pains”).

Will the initiative of the Class of 2005 inspire future classes to continue this tradition? The permanence of this form of expression must surely tempt some of the young idealists who have seen their sidewalk chalkings wash away during the next hard rain. Yet, after four years at Swarth-





more, the Parrish stone slogans may seem simplistic, with little relevance to the complex world into which they will graduate. Besides, who ever heard of writing a thesis with just three or four well-chosen words?

Still, I hope the tradition continues; I hope the silence of 1938 doesn't descend on the College for another 70 years. Maybe someday, my favorite Quaker aphorism will be carved in stone for future generations to ponder and make their own. It is simply this: "Proceed as the way opens." ☘

*A complete list of all 30 mottos and photographs of the high-relief carvings may be found with this article on the Bulletin Web site: [www.swarthmore.edu/bulletin](http://www.swarthmore.edu/bulletin).*



"Professor" Peter Schickele meets his musical discovery—and alter-ego—P.D.Q. Bach, composer of such immortal works as *Hansel and Gretel* and *Ted and Alice*.

# SWARTHMORE'S FIRST *Music Major*

DURING 40 YEARS AS "P.D.Q. BACH," PETER SCHICKELE '57  
HAS LAID BARE THE COMIC UNDERSIDE OF  
MUSICAL CONVENTION.

By Paul Wachter '97

Two winters ago, at his "40-year Retrogressive" concert at Manhattan's Symphony Space Theater, composer Peter Schickele made one of his few concessions to age. Rather than make his entrance swinging Tarzan-style from a rope—as he had famously done 30 years earlier at Carnegie Hall—he descended from the balcony by ladder.

"Hey, give me a break," Schickele told the audience. "I'm 70."

The concert was a celebration of the remarkable canon of P.D.Q. Bach, the fictional 21st child of Johann Sebastian Bach and the unsteady quill behind *Echo Sonata for Two Unfriendly Groups of Instruments*, *Oedipus Tex*, *The Abduction of Figaro*, and countless other parodies. I had attended at the invitation of a friend, a guest performer who plays the serpent—a medieval wind instrument that was only one of the many curious instruments on stage that night. (Various parts of a toilet also were used to outrageous effect.) The audience was one part Lincoln Center and four parts *Rocky Horror Picture Show*, taking their cues from Schickele's bon mots and puns and hissing stage manager William Walters, a longstanding tradition among P.D.Q. fans. It was great fun.

Peter Schickele was Swarthmore's first music major. "Back then, it was thought that music wasn't sufficiently intellectually rigorous," said his classmate Bill Rosenblum, a violinist. "Peter was the first to be accepted as a music major, I think, because he was obviously so talented."

It was a talent that he had developed long before he came to Swarthmore. Born in Ames, Iowa, Schickele spent his childhood in Washington, D.C., and Fargo, N.D. The moves were prompted by his father's career as an agricultural economist. Rainer, Schickele's father, played the flute recreationally; his mother, Elizabeth, was more accomplished on the piano.

But "as a kid, at first, I wasn't really into music," Schickele says. Along with his late brother, David '58, who followed him to Swarthmore, Schickele was a theater junkie. The two brothers erected a stage in their basement and put on their own plays, mostly Westerns. They called themselves the Nitso



JIM GRAHAM

Schickele performed for a packed house at the Lang Performing Arts Center during his 50th reunion in June.

Theater. “Nitso” was slang for neat, and, years later, as a professional composer, Schickele would recycle the name for his P.D.Q. Bach company, Nitso Productions.

One of Schickele’s early musical influences was Spike Jones, the popular radio star of the 1940s and 1950s. Jones’ band performed comic renditions of pop tunes as well as classical standards. “I became a Spike Jones geek,” Schickele says. In Fargo, Schickele, then 12, put together a Jones-inspired basement band with his brother and friends. Jerky Jems and His Balmy Brothers featured two clarinets, a violin, and a tom-tom. Schickele composed the arrangements, teaching himself as he went along. He also joined Fargo’s community orchestra as its only bassoonist.

His composition teacher, Sigvald Thompson, encouraged him to apply to Juilliard, Schickele says, but his parents wanted him to get a more balanced liberal-arts education, so he enrolled at Swarthmore.

“At the time, music wasn’t taught at a very serious level,” Schickele says. Associate Dean Gilmore Stott and several faculty members organized performances, but mostly the students provided for the lively music scene. Young musicians sat together in the Parrish Hall

dining room, and Schickele’s classmates can vividly recall arriving for dinner to find him already at the piano, improvising operas.

Schickele composed string quartets and chamber music that his fellow students, including his brother, performed at Bond Hall and other campus venues. Always, Schickele was experimenting, pushing himself. As a sophomore, he composed a Bartok-inspired piece featuring two pianos, percussion, and several wind instruments. In rehearsal at the Bond Parlor, the acoustics never sounded right. “So, he kept moving the wind instruments forward into the seating, pushing the audience farther and farther against the back wall,” recalled David Porter ’58, president emeritus of Skidmore College and an accomplished pianist himself.

Most of Schickele’s compositions during his time at Swarthmore were “serious” pieces, but there were also foreshadows of P.D.Q. Bach. During Peter’s senior year, he and David performed Shakespeare songs at a convocation. Dressed formally, they performed, to Everly Brothers–style accompaniment, “*Mañana, mañana, mañana*,” giving a Spanish tweak to the famous speech from *Macbeth*.

Following Swarthmore, Schickele attended Juilliard for three years. But before he enrolled that fall, he returned to Swarthmore and pretended to be a new student so that he could perform in the freshman talent show that traditionally was held after orientation, after the upper classes arrived. Schickele had taken a year off from college to battle and recover from polio, and for the performance, he adorned himself with his old crutches and back brace. He hobbled to the piano, where he proceeded to butcher a few Mozart selections. “Of course, all the upper classmen, who knew what Peter was all about, were roaring with laughter,” Porter says. “But the freshmen had no idea what was going on. They thought we were all making fun of a cripple and were wondering what sort of college this was. I was told that a few were traumatized for days.”

After graduating from Juilliard, Schickele was selected to participate in the Ford Foundation and National Music Council’s new Young Composers Project and became a composer-in-residence for Los Angeles-area high schools.

“I had assumed I was going to be a teacher,” Schickele says. “That’s how all but a few classical composers earn a living.” Sure enough, during the 1961–1962 school year, he taught at Swarthmore, while living in New York. He also began teaching at Juilliard. “It was a rough year. I had a class that got out at 9:20 at night in New York and a class the next morning at eight at Swarthmore.”

In April 1965, Schickele gave his first public P.D.Q. Bach concert at New York’s Town Hall. It was later released by Vanguard Records as *Peter Schickele Presents an Evening with P.D.Q. Bach (1807–1742)?*.

Twelve years earlier, back in Fargo, Schickele and a couple of friends had been listening to J.S. Bach’s *Coffee Cantata*, one of the composer’s few lighthearted works. In tribute, Schickele composed his *Sanka Cantata* and toyed around with inventing a pseudonymous composer. Bach had many children, some of whom were also musicians and became known by their initials. “One of the three of us—I’m not sure which—came up with P.D.Q., which stood for ‘pretty damn quick,’” Schickele said. He picked up the name again as a teacher at Juilliard for the school’s in-house concerts and its annual performances in Aspen, Colo.

For the 1965 Town Hall concert, Schickele had more or less developed the act that continues to sell out concert halls throughout

the country: A disheveled and zany “Professor” Peter Schickele, wearing a tuxedo and work boots, introduces the audience to the works of his great discovery, the forgotten P.D.Q. Bach. He intersperses music with pseudo-history, pointing out, for example, that P.D.Q. was largely responsible for Beethoven’s deafness:

Beethoven stuffed coffee grounds into his ears whenever he saw P.D.Q. approach.

“Mr. Schickele’s brand of humor depends a good deal on sight gags and spoken puns, but his greatest talent may well be the more subtle one of twisting serious music’s conventions in ways that uncover their comic underside,” wrote *New York Times* critic Michael Kimmelman, reviewing a later concert. “There is about these concerts something remarkable in hearing an audience laugh so genuinely at an unresolved cadence or a clash of musical styles, both of which are among Mr. Schickele’s favorite tricks.”

After the Town Hall performance, Schickele left Juilliard to take P.D.Q. Bach on the road. At first, he toured with a 22-piece orchestra, “which,” he says, “was a very efficient way to lose money.” He pared down the act to two vocalists and a stage manager, while still occasionally inviting guest performers. “I never thought it was something I could make a career out of, though,” Schickele says. “I would have been happy if it had lasted a few years.”

But P.D.Q. Bach was a hit, resonating both with classical aficionados and more casual listeners, who were drawn to Schickele’s quirkiness and humor. He even penned *The Definitive Biography of P.D.Q. Bach*, now in its 11th edition. (“I wrote every word, which I’m proud of and which is something I don’t think I could have done if it weren’t for my Swarthmore education,” he says.)

Inevitably, Schickele became better known for his fictional creation than his work as a “serious” composer. And when I spoke with him, I asked if, like Sir Arthur Conan Doyle with Sherlock Holmes, he ever came to resent his fictional creation’s popularity. Schickele quickly dismissed the notion.

*“I’ve been writing both serious and funny work since I was 13, and P.D.Q. Bach brings in enough revenue so that I can spend half of the year composing,” Schickele says.*

“I’ve been writing both serious and funny work since I was 13, and P.D.Q. Bach brings in enough revenue for me to be able to spend half of the year composing,” Schickele says. (Although he maintains an office in Manhattan, when he is not on the road, Schickele spends most of his time in upstate New York with his wife, Susan Sindall, a poet and occasional collaborator. They have two children—also composers and performers.)

On the serious side, Schickele has composed works for the National Symphony and the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center among others and has had his music performed by such artists as Yo Yo Ma and Emanuel Ax. For the past 17 years, the Armadillo String Quartet has performed annual concerts of his chamber music in Los Angeles. Throughout the 1990s, Schickele also hosted a weekly syndicated radio program titled *Schickele Mix*.

Now 72, Schickele has yet to slow down. He recently wrapped up his 42nd annual New York performance and also, to coincide with his 50th reunion, performed at Swarthmore’s Alumni Weekend in June. No one is prouder of this unique career than his classmates.

“Other Swarthmore classes of the 1950s produced politicians, publishers, and journalists,” says David Robinson ’57, a pianist who performed with Schickele at the reunion. “We produced Peter—the whole class takes pride in that.” ☞



© PETER SCHICKELE

Schickele has won five Grammy awards—four for comedy albums featuring P.D.Q. Bach and, most recently, for Best Classical Crossover Artists for his work with the Chestnut Brass Company. Here, he toots his own horn.

Paul Wachter, who writes in *New York*, is a frequent contributor to the *Bulletin*. He says he played trumpet in middle school but was discouraged from pursuing music further.

# 2007

## Reunion By the Numbers

**1,657** Alumni Weekend attendees

**45** Classes represented

**13** Countries represented

**41** States represented

**103** Events held during Alumni Weekend

Rain free for the first time in five years, Alumni Weekend 2007—held June 8 to June 10—was a beautiful time to be on campus. Alumni and guests came out in huge numbers (350 more than last year) to enjoy spending a few days at Swarthmore and taking advantage of the many varied events held across the campus.

On Friday evening, most alumni gathered for an outdoor cocktail party and dinner at Sharples Dining Hall, before making their way to one of three faculty lectures by Associate Professor of Astronomy Eric Jensen, Professor of Music Michael Marissen, and Associate Professor of Classics and Philosophy Grace Ledbetter. Following the lectures, Alumni Weekend attendees were invited to a special concert by Peter Schickele '57 (a.k.a. P.D.Q. Bach, see page 32), who was assisted by tenor David Düsing. Schickele, celebrating his 50th reunion, also treated his class to a mini-concert during their dinner on Saturday night.

Saturday was perfect for the traditional parade of classes. Led by the oldest alumnus in attendance, James Booser '31, the parade was marshaled by Dana Lyons and Bart Robins, both from the Class of '82. Serenading the parade with an irresistible Brazilian beat was Alô Brasil, a group that includes Alex Shaw '00. Collection in the Scott Amphitheater was a welcome change from five consecutive years of rain locations in Lang Performing Arts Center. John Montgomery '77, founder of Bridgeway Capital Management, gave the Collection address on "Choosing Powerfully Who You Are." Montgomery's talk also featured a few words by Susannah Gund '08.

Throughout the afternoon, there were events to suit every taste and generation, including seven panel discussions put together by alumni volunteers, a Balinese music and dance workshop led by Associate Professor of Music Tom Whitman '82, a kids' carnival, and various musical events including an open microphone session in the amphitheater and a rehearsal and performance of Mozart's *Requiem*, led by Associate Professor of Music John Alston.

The weekend concluded with reunion-class dinners on Saturday night and a final farewell breakfast in Sharples on Sunday morning. Alumni Weekend 2007 was a huge success, thanks to the perfect weather and to the many alumni, students, staff, and faculty volunteers who worked countless hours to make sure everyone had a fabulous time. To view more photos of Alumni Weekend, visit <http://picasaweb.google.com/swarthmore.alumni>. We look forward to seeing you again next June!

—Lisa Lee '81

Director of Alumni Relations

Right: "Decadent poets" from the Class of 1977 march in the parade.

Below, Patrice Barley '02, Elizabeth Lindsey '02, and Andy Wong '02 (left to right) at their class dinner on Trotter lawn



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Above: Members of the Class of 1942 Betsy Cook, Tom Findley, Lucy Rickman Baruch, Jacqueline Quadow Russler, and Ruth Wolf Page find each other at the all-alumni cocktail hour.



JIM GRAHAM



PHILLIP COOPER '57



JIM GRAHAM



PHILLIP COOPER '57

*Top:* Alumni Collection in the Scott Amphitheater

*Above center:* Members of the 50th reunion Class of 1957

*Above right:* A future Swarthmorean enjoys himself at the kids' carnival on Saturday afternoon.

*Left:* Student workers eagerly await arriving alumni.

*Right:* Alumni artists who showcased their work during Alumni Weekend were Minna Newman Nathanson '57, Walter Taylor '62, Robin Hannay Nelson '67, Kaete Brittin Shaw '67, Alice Zinnes '77, Eve Jacobs-Carnahan '82, and Malado Baldwin '97.



JIM GRAHAM

## NEW TEAM TO LEAD ALUMNI COUNCIL

A new Executive Committee—with members spanning six decades and the length and breadth of the country from Hawaii to Virginia and New York to Texas—will lead Swarthmore's Alumni Council as it seeks to add value to our contributions to the College and expand alumni participation in life at Swarthmore in ways that are consistent with and reinforce the College's values.

Kevin Quigley '74 steps up from vice president to president; Sue Aldrich '71, Josh Green '92, and Tracey Stokes '89 are the new vice presidents, with David Samuels '89, Joyce Klein Perry '65, and Albert Kim '93 as their workgroup co-chairs. Continuing to serve as Executive Committee members are Seth Brenzel '94, the immediate past president; Sam Awuah '94, the Council's liaison to the College's Long-term Planning Task Force; and Minna Newman Nathanson '57, who will move from vice president to secretary. Rounding out the Executive Committee are Jim Moskowitz '88, national connection chair, and Bill Belanger '66, national extern chair.

Together, they represent more than 35 years of service on the Council and have served the College in a variety of ways, among them as extern coordinators and hosts, Connection chairs, interviewers, and book club hosts.

When asked why she agreed to remain on the Council, Nathanson indicated that she wanted to continue to give something back to the College, and "since not everyone can contribute a million dollars, I'm working on contributing a million minutes." Samuels said he hoped that "we can institutionalize a role for the



Larry '56 (left) and Marty Porter Shane '57 (center) stayed with Ned Bright '56 (right) and his wife, Jill, at their home outside Skibbereen in southwest Ireland this past May. The Shanes' trip to Ireland was launched at Larry's 50th reunion in June 2006, when the first item offered at an auction to benefit the class scholarship was a five-night stay at the Brights' 100-year-old farmhouse.

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Kevin Quigley '74 (left) receives the Alumni Association gavel from Seth Brenzel '94 at Alumni Collection. Quigley will serve a two-year term as head of the Alumni Council and ex-officio member of the Board of Managers.

Alumni Council in the upcoming strategic planning process."

The Council's new team will hold a planning retreat on Sept. 29 to 30 in advance of the fall meeting on Nov. 2 to 4. If you have any suggestions for ideas or goals that you would like the Council to explore, please send them to [alumni\\_\\_council@swarthmore.edu](mailto:alumni__council@swarthmore.edu) before the retreat. If you are interested in serving on the Council, please contact the Alumni Office at [alumni@swarthmore.edu](mailto:alumni@swarthmore.edu) or telephone (610) 328-8402.

### RECENT EVENTS

**St. Louis:** On July 14, Elizabeth Loeb (wife of the late Virgil Loeb Jr. '42) graciously welcomed more than two dozen St. Louis area alumni, parents, and friends into her home to hear Swarthmore alumna Rishi Reddi '88 read from her recently published book *Karma and Other Stories*.

**Tucson:** In mid-July, the Tucson Connection book group met at the home of Dabney '51 and Kate Worth Altaffer '52. Organized by group chair Laura Markowitz '85, the regularly scheduled and well-attended group discussed Chalmers Johnson's *Nemesis: The Last Days of the American Republic*.

### UPCOMING EVENTS

Swarthmore's Faculty on the Road program will be back in full force for the 2007–2008 academic year, with events in the works for Ann Arbor, Arlington, Austin, Baltimore, Brooklyn, Cambridge, Chicago, Denver, Durham, Los Angeles, Minneapolis, New York City, Portland, San Francisco, and Seattle.

For more information about upcoming Connection and Faculty on the Road events, please visit

[www.swarthmore.edu/alumni\\_\\_events.xml](http://www.swarthmore.edu/alumni__events.xml)



# ALUMNI



# COUNCIL

## OFFICERS

### President

Kevin Quigley '74

### Vice Presidents

Susan Aldrich '71

Josh Green '92

Sabrina Martinez '92

### Secretary

Minna Newman Nathanson '57

## MEMBERS

### ZONE A

*Delaware, Pennsylvania*

Mara Lee Baird '79<sup>2</sup>

Wyndmoor, Pa.

Kevin Browngoehl '78<sup>2</sup>

Bryn Mawr, Pa.

Delvin Dinkins '93<sup>2</sup>

West Chester, Pa.

Elizabeth Geiger '96<sup>4</sup>

Ardmore, Pa.

Jove Graham '96<sup>3</sup>

Lewisburg, Pa.

Daniel Honig '72<sup>41</sup>

Swarthmore, Pa.

Loring Pfeiffer '02<sup>3</sup>

Pittsburgh, Pa.

### ZONE B

*New Jersey, New York*

Jorge Aguilar '05<sup>1</sup>

New York, N.Y.

Lauren Belfer '75<sup>4</sup>

New York, N.Y.

Patricia Aileen Funk '06<sup>2</sup>

Brooklyn, N.Y.

Max Gottesman '56<sup>2</sup>

New York, N.Y.

Joyce Klein Perry '65<sup>2</sup>

Rochester, N.Y.

Steven Rood-Ojalvo '73<sup>1</sup>

Haddonfield, N.J.

Daniel Werther '83<sup>3</sup>

New York, N.Y.

Ruth Shoemaker Wood '01<sup>3</sup>

Hoboken, N.J.

### ZONE C

*Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont*

Gwendolyn Cadge '97<sup>2</sup>

Somerville, Mass.

Mary Morse Fuqua '59<sup>1</sup>

Williamstown, Mass.

Karen Kelly '73<sup>1</sup>

Williamstown, Mass.

Judd Liebman '86<sup>3</sup>

Lexington, Mass.

Thomas Riddell '66<sup>1</sup>

Northampton, Mass.

Russell Robbins '84<sup>2</sup>

Wilton, Conn.

Barbara Sicherman '55<sup>3</sup>

West Hartford, Conn.

### ZONE D

*District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia*

William Bradford '66<sup>3</sup>

Washington, D.C.

Albert Kim '93<sup>1</sup>

Washington, D.C.

Rosanne Boldman McTyre '74<sup>1</sup>

Washington, D.C.

Ken Moskowitz '76<sup>1</sup>

Arlington, Va.

Christopher Plum '75<sup>2</sup>

Silver Spring, Md.

Barbara Yoder Porter '62<sup>2</sup>

Kensington, Md.

Ann Cochran Sloan '64<sup>3</sup>

Annapolis, Md.

Tracey Stokes '89<sup>4</sup>

Mitchellville, Md.

### ZONE E

*Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Texas, West Virginia, and Wisconsin*

Sandra Alexander '73<sup>2</sup>

Tulsa, Okla.

Gerardo Aquino '96<sup>2</sup>

Houston, Texas

Maurice Kerins '76<sup>1</sup>

Dallas, Texas

Jan Mostov '79<sup>3</sup>

Youngstown, Ohio

Susan Morrison '81<sup>3</sup>

Austin, Texas

David Samuels '89<sup>2</sup>

Minneapolis, Minn.

### ZONE F

*Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, territories, dependencies, and foreign countries*

Julie Brill '85<sup>2</sup>

Toronto, Ont.

Antoinette Graefin zu Eltz '01<sup>3</sup>

Munich, Germany

Amy Lansky Knowlton '87<sup>1</sup>

Decatur, Ga.

Neil Hesel '74<sup>3</sup>

Vero Beach, Fla.

Peter Seixas '69<sup>2</sup>

Vancouver, B.C.

David Zee '07<sup>3</sup>

Hong Kong, S.A.R.

### ZONE G

*Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming*

Susan Bernhardt '83<sup>3</sup>

Denver, Colo.

Christine Halstead '91<sup>1</sup>

Foster City, Calif.

Karen Holloway '57<sup>2</sup>

Fountain Hills, Ariz.

Barry Schkolnick '80<sup>1</sup>

Los Angeles, Calif.

David Steinmuller '56<sup>3</sup>

Gallatin Gateway, Mont.

### CONNECTION REPRESENTATIVES

*National Connection Chair*

James Moskowitz '88

*Austin/San Antonio*

Emily Albrink Hartigan '68

*Boston*

David Wright '69

*Chicago*

Marilee Roberg '73

*Denver*

Erin Trapp '92

Philip Weiser '90

*Durham*

Julia Knerr '81

*Houston*

Susan Tapscott '72

*London*

Abby Honeywell '85

*Metro DC/Baltimore*

Trang Pham '01

Wuryati Morris '04

Arthur Zito Jr. '81

Jacqueline Easley '96

*Metro NYC*

Rahul Bhalodia '02

Chirag Chotalia '03

Jerry Melichar '00

Anna Orgera '83

Reshma Pattni '06

Win Ling Chia '06

*Miami*

Ana Corrales '97

Jaime Raich '97

*Michigan*

Kathe Johnson '65

Tanyaporn Wansom '02

Derrick Wansom '05

*Paris*

Anais Loizillon '95

*Philadelphia*

James Moskowitz '88

Paula Goulden Naitove '79

*Pittsburgh*

Barbara Sieck Taylor '75

*San Francisco*

Autumn Quinn-Elmore '04

*Seattle*

Lorin Nelson '00

James Schembs '01

Deborah Schaaf '95

*Tucson*

Laura Markowitz '85

*Twin Cities*

Rebeka Ndosi '97

1 Term ends 2008.

2 Term ends 2009.

3 Term ends 2010.

4 Nominating Committee

# Poet's Work Soothes the Soul

IN VERSE, HARRIET BARRETT '45 PONDERES SPIRITUALITY, LOVE, NATURE, AND ADVERSITY.



KIM WALKER/NEWS & RECORD GREENSBORO, N.C.

Harriett Barrett treasures her friendship with a Japanese businessman, whom she met through her poetry. Read some of her poems at [www.swarthmore.edu/bulletin](http://www.swarthmore.edu/bulletin).

Ideas, words, or phrases often slip through Harriett Barrett's subconscious, awakening her as early as 4 a.m. She turns on the light, grabs the pencil and paper by her bed, and begins to write.

"This stuff just comes pouring out of me," she says. Barrett, 82, writes because she must. "It's just in me. It's an inborn force. This is my way of connecting, of expressing my deepest emotions."

She also writes as a way to help others. Her poems explore spirituality, faith, love, nature, and overcoming adversity. She draws on her own life experiences and observations and those of her friends. "At my age, your body starts to deteriorate, but spiritually, things are so clear," Barrett says. "The more adversity in your life, the stronger you become."

She knows of what she speaks. Barrett's mother died when she was just 13. Her brother was killed in World War II while she was at Swarthmore. Her husband died of lung cancer 20 years ago. But they live on in her poetry. A poem about her brother was set to music and recorded on a CD, produced by California's Hilltop Records.

Barrett has published six books of poetry since 2001, and she's working on a seventh. Four of her poems appear as songs on CDs.

Barrett's journey as a writer began in the seventh grade, when

she won poetry contests while at a private girls' school in Montclair, N.J. A high school teacher further encouraged her writing and helped her get into Swarthmore.

During her college years, Barrett spent so much time writing papers and dissecting poetry that she rarely had time to construct her own. She majored in English, minored in philosophy, and earned a degree in three years.

When Barrett married, she put poetry aside to focus on raising her three children. She didn't attempt to write a poem until after her husband died. After that poem, Barrett couldn't stop writing.

"I was so happy that I'd been able to do it because I hadn't been able to do it for so long," she says. It's taken her about a decade to get her writing the way she wants it, she says. "It's a lot of work. It's a progression."

Barrett, whose vision is limited by glaucoma, has a friend who types her poems. She also regularly shares her work with friend and neighbor Gail Hersh. Hersh, who wrote a school paper on leadership in iambic pentameter, also writes poetry. He says Barrett's strongest poems are those about spirituality. "It is the area where she shines. Her poems flow beautifully and simmer as she chooses each word with great care."

Barrett, who has been known to argue with book publishers over editing decisions, says it takes at least three days to craft a poem to her satisfaction. She believes poetry is underrated because people have to think too hard to understand it. People today place too much value on material possessions and don't take the time to think or enjoy the beauty in their lives, she says. Parents don't spend enough time with their kids, and there's too much dependence on computers.

"This world is in very bad shape," she says.

The book she's currently writing explores issues surrounding time. Last summer, Barrett had the opportunity to discover that time—with the help of poetry—heals. After losing family members and other loved ones in World War II, she blamed the Japanese as the aggressors. "Harriett seethed. For six decades, she held a grudge against the Japanese," journalist Jeri Rowe writes in an article in the May 26 Greensboro, N.C., *News & Record*. Rowe goes on to report how, last year, thanks to a longtime friend, Barrett became acquainted by mail with her friend's Japanese business partner, an English teacher in Japan who, after being introduced by his business associate to Barrett's poetry, used it in his classes. Barrett and her new Japanese pen pal regularly exchange letters about themselves and their lives and have discovered many common interests besides poetry. Barrett's animosity toward the Japanese has dissipated.

"His friendship opened my heart. I'll treasure it for life," she says.

*Adapted with permission of the Greensboro, N.C., News & Record from "Poet's Work Soothes the Soul," (April 30, 2007) by Tina Firesheets.*

# GESSNER, PI

WHEN A SWARTHMORE FILMMAKER GOES UNDERCOVER ...

Peter Gessner '61, *The Big Hello and the Long Goodbye* (Hilliard & Harris, 2007)

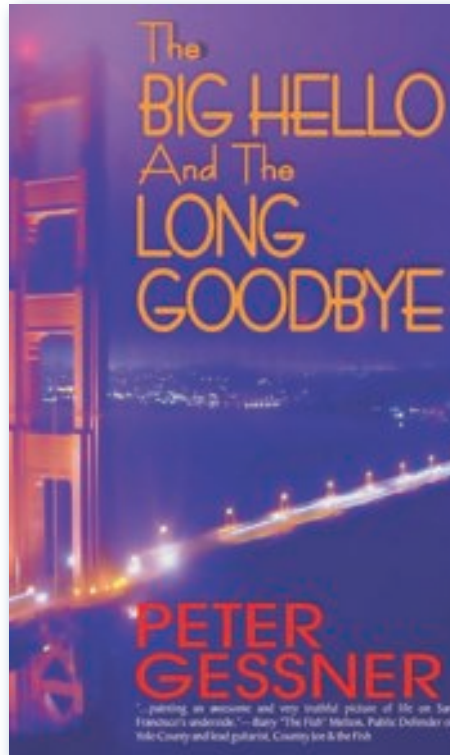
Who knew? It never would have crossed my mind that my good college friend and fellow English major toiled outside the boundaries of his creative work as a screenwriter and filmmaker in the gritty arena of the private investigator (PI).

Prompted by real-life observations and conversations, Pete Gessner's novel *The Big Hello and The Long Goodbye* tells the story of a transplanted New York loner, who, while eking out a living as a PI in San Francisco, is pushed to the ethical limits of his profession when two apparently separate cases—the shooting of a Palestinian-American girl by her 15-year-old brother and the disappearance of a mentally unstable mathematical genius—begin to unfold and intertwine.

Gessner wasn't available for a face-to-face interview, so I conducted one via e-mail. Some answers came that way; others came from his publisher's press package.

*ME: How'd you get into this work?*

PG: My first investigation was of myself. Back in the day, those of us of a certain generation requested our F.B.I. files as a kind of rite of passage to determine the extent of the government's interest in our anti-Vietnam War activities. One day, a 10-pound package landed outside my door. The attorney who'd help me acquire the files suggested I go through them, make notes, and determine what had been blanked out so we could ask for more. Years later, I realized that this was the "material review" that investigators perform at the beginning of a new case. Around this time, I'd heard about a group of San Francisco private investigators who'd received their training from the legendary Hal Lipset, an investigator for the congressional committee that investigated the Watergate scandal. I was fortunate enough to find work with some of them and accumulate hours towards my own licensing.



Gessner's novel was inspired by real-life observations and conversations. Unlike most mystery writers, he has his protagonist work two cases simultaneously.

*ME: How did your work as a PI contribute to this first novel?*

PG: I'd like to say it was "ripped from the headlines," but, actually, I began to write it before Sept. 11. I'd become friends with my corner convenience-store proprietor—in San Francisco, many are Palestinian refugees—and we often engaged in frank discussions about the Middle East. He had a son who was clearly Americanized. I could see trouble brewing, and I guess I unconsciously stored some of my conjectures about what might develop between father and son, to draw upon them later when I started the novel. The actual impetus for the idea of an "honor killing" came several years later, when a fellow PI told me about a case in which a son became the "designated" shooter of his sister. I tried to imagine what

I might uncover as an investigator, were I handed something similar.

*ME: How about influences from other writers, those in the "noir" genre, for example?*

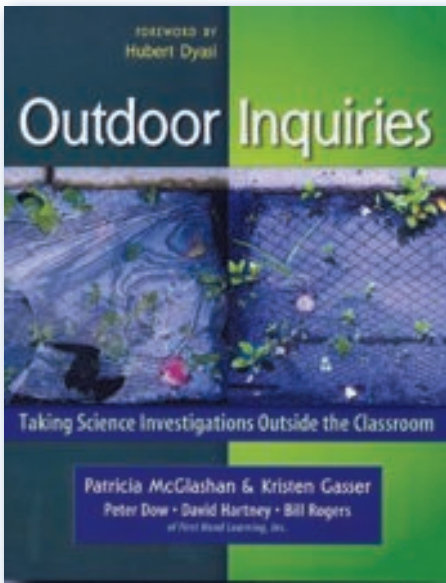
PG: Influence is a difficult and dangerous concept for a writer. As for noir influences, I guess I have read all the classics—Hammett, Chandler, Ross MacDonald—and admire them, of course, but I try not to be influenced too much by their style. There's also Jim Thompson and Horace McCoy. More recent authors I find interesting are Scotsman Ian Rankin and, on our own turf, Richard Price, who's not really a noir writer—but he is a great teller of urban truths (Spike Lee directed the screenplay for one of his recent novels).

*ME: The Big Hello opens darkly with an "honor killing" within a Palestinian-American family, a concept and practice that could have come from contemporary headlines—but a killing for which our shamus, Walker, uncovers other motivating forces. Then, imitating the realities of a true-life PI, you introduce a second complicated case, which Walker pursues simultaneously, tripping over lines of ideology and internationalism that overlap the first case, including elements of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. Why did you decide to do that?*

PG: Having him work two cases is closer to the reality of what private detectives actually do. Unlike our fictional counterparts, we often work several cases at once. It was also a literary choice. While reading Ian Rankin, I was jealous of the fact that his detectives had the resources to work several cases at once. So I thought why not? I also wanted to explore how the larger Palestinian-Israeli conflict might play out in both the microcosm of one family and in the macrocosm of international politics. Both of my detective's cases involved families and pairs of brothers, which allowed me to explore these themes in very personal terms.

—Maurice Eldridge '61

Vice President for College and Community Affairs and Executive Assistant to the President



Patricia McGlashan, Kristen Gasser, Peter Dow, David Hartney '81, and Bill Rogers, *Outdoor Inquiries: Taking Science Investigations Outside the Classroom*, Heinemann, 2007. This guide encourages science teachers to supplement their classroom instruction by moving outdoors to practice collecting and analyzing data.

**Glen Carman '85**, *Rhetorical Conquests: Cortés, Gómara, and Renaissance Imperialism*, Purdue University Press, 2006. This study examines how Hernán Cortés, as the author of his *Cartas de relación* (1519–1526) and as the protagonist of Francisco López de Gómara's *Historia de la conquista de México* (1552), defends Spain's conquest of Mexico.

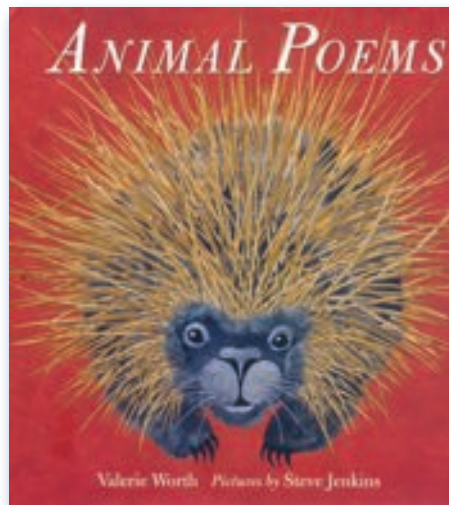
**Ronald Diamond '68** and Patricia Scheifler, *Treatment Collaboration: Improving the Therapist, Prescriber, Client Relationship*, W.W. Norton & Co., 2007. This book helps navigate the agendas of all parties involved in mental health treatment, to produce an optimal relationship and treatment that works.

**Ruth Mary Lamb '56**, *At the End of the Road: Reflections on Life in an Adirondack Valley*, Pyramid Publishing Inc., 2007. This memoir follows the Lambs' retirement adventure living in a valley deserted of people but rich in flora and fauna.

Liat Margolis and **Alexander Robinson '99**, *Living Systems: Innovative Materials and Technologies for Landscape Architecture*, Birkhauser

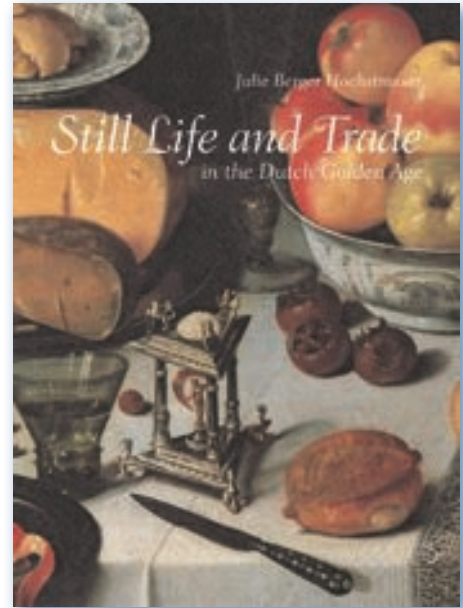
Verlag, 2007. Surveying a wide array of innovative approaches to material technologies in landscape architecture, the authors select projects and materials reflecting the current demand for technological landscapes and the collaboration between designers, engineers, scientists, and ecologists.

**Janet Smith Warfield '58**, *Shift: Change Your Words, Change Your World*, Word Sculptures Publishing, 2007. The result of 35 years of researching, journaling, studying and playing with words to describe an earthshaking experience so powerful and unifying that the author was unable to communicate it at the time, this book aims to catalyze the same experience in others by using words to bring peace to the turmoils of daily life.



Valerie Worth '55 and Steve Jenkins (illustrator), *Animal Poems*, Farrar Straus Giroux, 2007. Twenty-three animals—from the quick hummingbird to the ungainly camel to the shovel-pawed, star-nosed mole—come to life in the late Worth's elegant free verse and Jenkins strikingly beautiful cut-paper illustrations.

**Joshua Zeitz '96**, *White Ethnic New York: Jews, Catholics, and the Shaping of Postwar Politics*, The University of North Carolina Press, 2007. Unlike typical historians of postwar-American politics, who often identify race as a driving force in the shifting political culture, Zeitz instead places religion and ethnicity at the fore.



Julie Berger Hochstrasser '76, *Still Life and Trade in the Dutch Golden Age*, Yale University Press, 2007. Hochstrasser explores for the first time the significance of various foods and commodities rendered on canvas during the Dutch public's phenomenal rise to prosperity.

#### OTHER MEDIA

Mark and **Matthew Lore '88**, illustrated by Robert Zimmerman, *Flying Rubberneckers*, Chronicle Books, 2007. From the creators of the popular *Rubberneckers* and *Rubberneckers Jr.*, this new card game for airline passengers will turn travel boredom into entertainment and literally make time fly.



**Arthur Fink '68**, *Dance*. Fink's photographic images from the Bates Dance Festival were on display at the Chase Hall Gallery at Bates College this summer. He has spent the last three summers as resident photographer at the Festival.

# Pet Products Trending Tails Up

YVETTE MILLER BROWN'S ['82] BUSINESS IS GOING TO THE DOGS—AND THE CATS.



ELEFTHERIOS KOSTANS

Yvette Miller Brown (with her cat Butterscotch) says 73 percent of sales of any product comes from face-to-face interaction. That's why in-home parties work well for her business.

Yvette Miller Brown knows a strong business trend when she sees one. According to a 2007–2008 survey by the American Pet Products Manufacturers' Association (APPMA) there are 74 million dogs and 88 million cats in the United States. In 2006, Americans spent \$38.5 billion on their pets, and the APPMA estimates that it will rise to \$40 billion in 2007.

With this knowledge, a business background, and a love of animals, Brown founded Totally Pawsome, formerly known as Posh Pet Parties, a direct-sales business that caters to dogs, cats, and all pet lovers with an inventory ranging from fun and playful to functional and health conscious. Her consultants give demonstrations of the company's products at in-home gatherings.

"We're a young company," said Brown, who started Totally Pawsome (totallypawsome.com) in January 2006, "but I studied the market and did the research. I found fabulous products that are not in the mass retail stores. We offer the convenience of bringing them to the customer and take the time to explain their benefits."

The Totally Pawsome inventory offers everything from a \$5 package of treats and a \$265 luxury bed for pets, to \$20 animal-themed photo frames and a pair of \$990 breed specific diamond earrings for animal lovers.

Brown, whose business is based in West Chester, Pa., entered the direct-sales business for two reasons: She was looking for a lifestyle change, and she wanted to offer the same opportunity to a large number of people.

Before starting her own business, Brown, who has an engineering degree from Swarthmore and an M.B.A. from Villanova University, worked as an engineer and marketer in the energy field. But the corporate environment left her unfulfilled and frustrated, especially with how it affected her family—husband Charles, a power plant engineer, and daughter Adrienne, 14.

"I was miserable," she says, "and when I talked it over with my husband, he said there was no reason to spend my life this way and encouraged me to start my own business."

Her own Siberian cat, Butterscotch, inspired her to enter the pet industry. "I'm in the house most of the day with her. I just adore her; she's my buddy," says Brown. Butterscotch is often a model for the various outfits and accessories the company sells.

"The direct-sales market offered me an opportunity to grow a new business from the ground up. I also see it as a win-win situation for the consultants who work the business," she says.

According to the Direct Selling Association's most recent statistics of 2005, members of the direct-selling sales force are primarily female, ages 35 to 54, work part time, and are married and college educated. The 2005 statistics also show that the direct-sales industry contributed almost \$30 billion to the economy.

"Direct sales is for those who seek flexibility in their lives, believe in the products they sell, and desire to make money," Brown says. "A Totally Pawsome consultant can work to earn enough money for a vacation or to change their family's lifestyle. It's completely up to them." Orders from parties average \$500, she says.

Brown also expects to expand the business. "Two years from now, I would like see more than 1,000 individuals taking advantage of this business opportunity, earning to match their goals. Five years from now, organic growth could raise the number by a factor of 10. Under this scenario, revenues could exceed \$20 million. However the real measure of success will be the development of the consultants, and the strength of the charitable organizations we interface with and support through our products and Web site," Brown says.

Initially, she had some trepidation about the direct-sales market.

"I admit, at first, I worried about what my friends would say when they heard I was leaving the corporate life and going into this business. But they don't live my life. This feels right. I'm still building a business where I have to use strong management and leadership skills. And I hope to create opportunities for others in my own corporation. A lot of time and work goes into growing a business. I have a passion for this business," Brown says, "and whatever your business is, you have to have a passion for it."

—Audree Penner

# See Sanda Fly

SANDA BALABAN '94 HELPS EMPOWER NEW YORK PRINCIPALS, TEACHERS, AND STUDENTS.



SAM ERICKSON '88

"If principals, teachers, and parents are prepared to accept freedom and responsibility for their schools—and be held accountable for doing so—then we want them to have that opportunity," says Sanda Balaban, now an "empowerment leader" for Empowerment Schools in the New York City public system.

Sanda Balaban has worked for prominent philanthropic organizations, played an integral role in attempts to reform the public school system, traveled the world, and met some of society's most influential leaders.

So, naturally, she wants to discuss the *flying trapeze*.

"I'd never done it before," she said. "A friend and I signed up for a sunset lesson. The experience was *exhilarating!*"

It also serves as a fitting metaphor. The process of enthusiastically jumping in with both feet to take on a daunting challenge is the story of Balaban's career.

After college, the suburban Philadelphia native joined Teachers Network, an organization that identifies and rewards outstanding teachers and networks them with others to improve the profession.

Balaban found the educators so inspiring that she soon rolled up her sleeves and became one—teaching high school humanities in New York and Boston.

After earning a master's in education from Harvard, she joined the Boston Private Industry Council, coordinating internships and school-to-career programs for students from alternative schools. Having seen school systems from several perspectives, she became interested in what she refers to as "educational architecture. I wanted to identify what changes could be designed and implemented to help public schools reach their fullest potential."

Balaban spent the next several years in the philanthropic sector, working in K-12 and higher education reform at the Ford Founda-

tion and The Goldman Sachs Foundation. She also helped launch a peer network called Emerging Practitioners in Philanthropy.

In 2003, Balaban took another leap—and this time, there would be no net. After following the new reform agenda for New York City's public schools, Balaban jumped at the chance to become special assistant to Eric Nadelstern, regional superintendent of schools in the East Bronx.

"I'd been trying to leverage innovation from outside the school system. Suddenly, we had opportunities to effect change from within the system on a large scale," she says.

Balaban went with Nadelstern to the Office of New Schools, helping to launch and support dozens of small schools and creating Autonomy Zone—an initiative that gives schools more decision-making power over curriculum, budget, schedule, and other matters in return for rigorous accountability.

According to Balaban, the early results have been promising. "Autonomy Zone schools outperformed citywide statistics in every area and outperformed their own previous performances," she says. In mid-2006, New York City Schools Chancellor Joel Klein rechristened the concept as Empowerment Schools and expanded it further.

"The idea is that those closest to students—principals in consultation with teachers and parents—are in the best position to determine how students learn best and to make the important decisions about how best to accomplish that," Balaban says.

The roster rapidly grew to more than 300 schools, and with it, Balaban's role. As chief of staff for Empowerment Schools, Balaban spends much of her time helping schools equip students for an unknowable future. She also remains keenly cognizant of her past, believing that the two are directly connected.

"At Swarthmore, [Professor of Educational Studies] Lisa Smulyan opened my eyes to the issues of urban education. Other professors—like [former Associate Professor of English Literature] Abbe Blum, [Professor of English Literature] Nathalie Anderson, and [Professor of Theater] Allen Kuharski—helped hone my vision of what great teaching and learning feels like," Balaban says.

Balaban—who majored in English literature and minored in education and theater with a concentration in women's studies—maintains her Swarthmore ties. She has led Connections groups in Boston and New York and continues to lead the New York Alumni Book Group.

In summer 2007, Balaban transitioned from her position as chief of staff to become an empowerment network leader. She supports and facilitates the work of 21 schools—including 18 middle schools, a key frontier for reform.

"I've been so lucky to be in situations in which I'm consistently tackling new tasks, stretching myself, and learning new things every day," she says. The flying trapeze included.

—Greg Forbes Siegman

# ON RAFTS

SEVEN DAYS, TWO RIVERS—FRIENDS FOR LIFE

By John Tuthill '06

When you are drifting on a raft down the Delaware River, three days after the completion of your rookie college season, there isn't anything to feel except untainted glee. Even if you probably failed two of your exams and submitted a final paper in which you compared Michel Foucault to the proudest of all the game birds, the pheasant, there are more important diversions to cloud your drifting mind. Clouds, for example, arrange themselves into dinosaurs and phallic murals for you to speculate about and debate. The visions you conjured for weeks prior, of lazily donned straw hats, dissonantly crooned ballads, and the fervent nausea of chewing tobacco—those images that distracted you like pornography in the trenches of a great war—have replaced the stupid prose that crowds the conclusion of a college semester.

In May 2003, I agreed to construct and board a homemade raft with eight friends I had made during that period of innocent freshman sociability that characterizes one's first year at college. We were floating a 40-mile stretch of the Delaware River on a craft we had built a week earlier on the lawn of Papazian of two-by-fours and 55-gallon grain-storage barrels purchased from a junkyard while on a liquor run to Delaware.

The raft was a predominately abstract concept and the object of much architectural and literary debate prior to its construction. Our modest, jalopy-esque craft was a product of nebulous draftsmanship, hardly navigable in that it took eight strong paddlers a good 10 minutes to cross a 50-foot patch of river. But when we pushed off from the shore, the sky darkening above us, it held our weight obligingly.

For two full days, we sat on that raft, smoking, spitting, and laughing at flatulence that lingered for brief moments before being sucked upstream. We flowed along like characters from mythology: Chris guiding the winds with his mighty trident; Tev sitting at the back of the raft gazing at his reflection in the river; Ben singing along as sirens belted their alluring tunes from the banks of the Delaware. Toby provided run-

ning commentary in iambic pentameter, while Brandt practiced culinary alchemy over the Coleman stove. For once, it seemed to work. By night, we camped on the mucky banks and played with firecrackers around a waltzing campfire.

The third and final day proved less auspicious than those before it. After fighting a losing battle with a wicked rapid, we were forced to drag our dilapidated raft to a small island for renovations. On the island, I sliced open my arm with a very sharp knife while performing some foolish and unnecessary task. Once we had bandaged both the raft and the avulsed idiot (me), we were barely on our way again before we were accosted by accusatory law enforcement officials. Somehow, we managed to get off the river with only a small fine for our shoddy lifejackets.

As unprepared as we were for our voyage, its conclusion was even more troubling. The final sentence of a clever book report might sum it up like this: "Then, they pulled the raft out of the river and went home and felt very glum that the trip was over, but they all knew that something had begun that would last for many, many years."

Like a delicious Wawa sandwich, my time at Swarthmore was stuffed with an overwhelming abundance of flavorful ingredients. During my third season at Swat, I moved into an apartment with my friends from the raft. A year later, as the conclusion of our Swarthmore education loomed like an abyss of leisure, we decided that it was too early for the dream to end. On a rainy night during our final semester, we gathered to imbibe—and decided to move to Missoula, Mont. In August 2006, we descended upon 1319 Sherwood Street, christening our new home "Camp Skip-Skip."

Like any post-college flophouse, there were both transients and regular patrons of

Aboard homemade rafts, the intrepid Swarthmore travelers navigated the Delaware and Missouri rivers.

Camp Skip-Skip. At maximum capacity, it provided a home for 10 Swatties. We were cooks, cabinetmakers, Army-Navy store employees, plasma-donors, biologists, carpenters, waiters, and full-time creative entrepreneurs. We paid people to draw us, pulled down the pants of belligerent strangers, and gave each other tattoos that will someday terrify children, grandchildren, and eventually undertakers. With our common oral tradition, consisting mainly of twaddle we had come up with at Swarthmore, we managed to alienate some people while becoming great friends with others. We were all ecstatic, all the time.

We made plans for a second trip. In the vast landscape of Montana, our options were less limited than in the tidy suburbs of Philadelphia. We chose the wild Missouri River, assembled our motley crew, and constructed an oddlyfamiliar raft from two-by-fours and blue grain storage barrels.

The crew of this boat was slightly different, but with a similar essence and a familiar scent. Each member contributed in characteristic fashion. Aaron dealt with permits and regulations. Tev directed construction. Marissa and Jon planned the feasting and snacking options. Arpy devised a scheme to throw the map in the river, while J-Will and Ben diligently worked to foil his plot. I stood by lazily and felt overwhelming affection for my magnificent, industrious friends.

Soon, we found ourselves on the river





COURTESY OF JOHN TUTHILL '06

IT'S LIKE A  
HEMINGWAY STORY ,  
WHERE EIGHT FRIENDS  
DRIFT DOWN A RIVER  
ON A RAFT, NOTHING  
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NOTHING REALLY  
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again, flanked by stately white sandstone cliffs. We admired the land and did hardly anything to speak of as we floated through it. There was some fishing, some reading, some snacking—and much rotation among these activities. When the river became too shallow, we would jump out and walk through the cold water to lighten the load. Periodically, Ben the bird-nerd would draw everyone’s attention to an osprey or a snarling duck that had caught his fancy.

We passed most of our time lounging pensively and speaking of the things that had happened and the people we had known over the past five years. This is what people do when they travel on rafts: they sit, and they think, and sometimes they talk. It’s like a Hemingway story, where eight friends drift down a river on a raft, nothing much is said, nothing really happens, and yet it is still outstandingly pleasing and profound.

“Why Montana?” people would occasionally ask us; “Why Missoula?” and we would bumble through pretexts of work or skiing or an abundance of hippie girls. Parents would call and ask incredulously, “You’re building what? A raft? Again?” They would sigh. “This time you’re paying the hospital bill.” We felt misunderstood, like seditious teenagers who, instead of slamming their doors and screaming, answer politely and effusively, stumbling through half-hearted

reasoning that repeatedly fails to capture what it was they actually hope to achieve.

We felt like the kids in the Apple Jacks commercials who were constantly questioned by grown-ups about why they ate and loved Apple Jacks. “It doesn’t really taste that much like apples,” the dull old-fashioned dad stereotype would argue, “Why do you like it so much?” And the teenagers would answer by rolling their eyes at the grown-up’s stupidity. “We just do!” they would shout in unison. Here is what the cereal-fiend teenagers might say if they

had the sagacity and pomposity acquired by the completion of puberty and four years at Swarthmore: They would say, “We eat this crap because it allows us to sit in our cluttered teenage bedrooms and enjoy the company of people we love.”

I came to this conclusion on the second day of the second trip, as we disembarked and ascended up and out of the Missouri gorge. We climbed through a narrow canyon that tapered as it rose, until it was barely wide enough for more than a single person to pass. At the top, we could see for miles in all directions, and we discovered that the landscape around us was nothing but barren hills.

I looked down to the river and spotted our tethered raft. It was tiny but hard to miss because we had painted the deck green and mounted a plastic chicken on the front. Dwarfed by the cliffs and the big river, the raft itself seemed irrelevant. What was important, I realized, was the leisurely passage of time among friends. I am fortunate to have passed the last five years of my life (including seven days on two rafts) sitting, thinking, and talking to a remarkable group of people whom I love and admire. ☺

*After disembarking, John Tuthill and his friends dispersed to pursue their various ambitions. He spent summer 2007 in a neurobiology lab in Argentina.*



Continued from page 3

fall somewhere in the middle or beyond the fringes of these political parties. It's not unusual for a nation to have leaders with views that differ greatly from those of much of her general populace. Still, considering some of the globally detrimental missteps in policy that our government has recently committed, it's easy to see why foreigners might find this hard to believe. It's a shame that we are seen, internationally, in such a negative light; and I don't deny that this is due to the sometimes abhorrent actions of our government. However, it's a great travesty when our own citizens persist in the dissemination of these stereotypes of the American people.

I currently live in Montana and, as in many other parts of the United States, the people here have a great deal of love for their country while struggling to reconcile their differing and changing views. In last year's elections, Montana swung from red to blue when we elected Jon Tester—a wheat farmer who built his political platform around withdrawal from Iraq—as our senator. So things in our nation aren't always as black and white as they seem. Admittedly, the United States has quite a way to go before it becomes the nation that I want it to be—energy-independent, a peacemaker, and a true champion of rights for gays, women, and immigrants—but that doesn't mean that I've given up on it or its people. Those on the opposite side of the political spectrum from where I stand have already claimed God, morality, and family as their sole provinces; I'm not about to let them appropriate my patriotism as well.

I agree that living abroad provides a wonderful set of revelations regarding one's home country and its place in the world. However, when you stay away too long, there's the danger that one set of misinformed assumptions will simply be supplanted by another. As members of the constantly-questioning Swarthmore community, we have a responsibility to avoid this sort of narrow-minded thinking. Sometimes, it's travel within our own country that provides the greatest measure of balance to our perspectives.

KEETJE KUIPERS '02  
Missoula, Mont.

### CLOSET SKEPTICS SURVIVED

"A Taste of Spirituality" (June *Bulletin*) refers to a survey of notable natural scientists who were active between 1543 and 1680. The survey found that 61 percent were devout, 35 percent were conventionally religious, and only four percent were skeptics. The article fails to mention that, at that time, known atheists were severely punished and were even burned at the stake. In light of this, it is not surprising that only four percent of notable natural scientists were skeptics. The true proportion of skeptics may well have been much greater, but it can never be known, since atheists who wished to survive hid their true beliefs.

PHYLLIS TEITELBAUM '67  
Princeton, N.J.

### THE CELLO AND GILMORE STOTT

Professor of Art Randall Exon's portrait of the late Gilmore Stott totally blew me away. His choice of the cello as the supporting icon in his painting cuts very deep for me.

My cello history goes way back with Gil and his family. When he interviewed me for admission to Swarthmore in a hotel room in Boston, we spent most our time talking music and my cello playing.

When I arrived on campus in fall 1958, in addition to becoming an instant member of the Monday-night-after-orchestra-rehearsal-chamber-music-and-food routine, Gil also asked me to give cello lessons to his daughter Miriam., who was a wonderful student. My next student from the family was Seth Tyler, the boyfriend—and soon to be husband—of Mary Porter Stott. Last and best of all was John, the youngest, who studied with me for many years. I've had the great delight to play music with John off and on for many years. We revived that chamber-music relationship after Gil's memorial service.

ED KLEIN '66  
Gainesville, Fla.

### LIBRARY MEMORIES...

Editor's Note: *In June, we published a call for library memories for a project being undertaken by College Librarian Peg Seiden—an article on "library as place." Seiden asked: What are your memories of the library during your college years? What part did the library play in your intellectual or social life? The following*

*are excerpts from some of the 15 responses Seiden received. If they jog your memory, share your own recollections with Seiden at [pseiden1@swarthmore.edu](mailto:pseiden1@swarthmore.edu), or write to her at McCabe Library, Swarthmore College, 500 College Avenue, Swarthmore PA 19081.*

### Ping Pong

My favorite memory is of playing Ping Pong in the library. There was an area that had large conference tables with a fair amount of space around them. I suppose we pushed two tables together, and then we made a "net" using books set on their edges, spines up. We bopped the Ping Pong ball back and forth over the "net" using thin flat books for paddles.

EDITH GARRISON GRIFFIN '70  
Groton, Mass.

### Sleeping Bags in the Stacks

My memory of the Swarthmore library is the astonishing number of people who seemed to go and *live* there for the duration of finals. We're talking sleeping bags back in the stacks. Next to each one would be piles of books (and always—for reasons I could never fathom—a roll of toilet paper). I found the whole idea kind of depressing and was never tempted to do it.

ALISON HUETTNER '79  
Pittsburgh, Pa.

### "Oh, my goodness!"

The old main reading room had a balcony around it with small study rooms opening onto the balcony. One evening, when the reading room was crowded, a girl opened the door of one of the rooms and screamed, attracting everyone's attention. "Oh my goodness," she exclaimed. "Excuse me! I'm so sorry!" And, red-faced, she beat a hasty retreat. From that moment until closing time (10 p.m.), all eyes were riveted on the closed door. The bell rang for closing, but no one moved. Finally, the door opened, and a shame-faced couple emerged. They were greeted with cheers—and we all went back to the dorm. You can see this is a very much dated story. I guess now no one would be interested in who was getting it on in the study rooms, and I'm sure the library stays open long past 10 p.m.

EVELYN EDSON '62  
Scottsville, Va.

# Brushes All Sticky With Words

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with words.” Grant researched the ladder as a symbol in fiction—such as James Joyce’s ladder to heaven and in Michael Joyce’s own work *Ladders*—as well as the biblical Jacob’s ladder and Cixous’ *Three Steps on the Ladder of Writing*. Envisioning four large-scale drawings, she asked Joyce to provide texts for a project that, she says, tied together her interests with those of Joyce and Cixous.

Joyce composed four poems, the last two during a 2004 visit to Los Angeles, where Grant also invited him to try his hand at painting. She translated these two into Spanish, thus making them her own. All four works have ladders interspersed among the dense layers of word loops that extend in every direction—up, down, right, left, and inward. Again, substrata reveal hints of mysteriously erased text, Grant’s testimony to the translation-evolution of the work. She confers a distinct character on each work by use or avoidance of particular colors. They all measure about 120 by 80 inches in size.

Grant’s most ambitious work to date is *babel* (after Michael Joyce’s “Was, 2006”), the product of an interest in landscape that emerged during the final stages of the *Ladder Quartet*. The stunning three-part horizontal wordscape, measuring 80 by 264 inches, consists of two slopes, densely forested by word balloons and connected (or separated) by a central valley. In the bottom right-hand corner, architectural structures are visible.

In all the works, reversed words make the text immediate yet unreadable, Grant says. Drawn with her left hand, they are often shaky and uneven. “It’s to create an image of language,” she says, “but to challenge what our notion of looking at words is—it’s not intended to be an easy read.”

Grant’s request for a gallery guide for the exhibit led to a further serendipitous collaboration. Offered a “Guide by Cell” tour, she sought advice from her good friend Dan Rothenberg ’95 of Philadelphia’s Pig Iron Theatre Company. Working with Grant and Joyce, Rothenberg recorded Joyce’s texts as accompaniments for the art works they had inspired. Both works and readings are accessible at [www.moca.org/audio](http://www.moca.org/audio).

An impressive catalog—itsself quite a work of art—accompanies the exhibit, the result of yet another creative exchange between Grant and designer Michael Worthington. Grant chose glossy silver for the outside and inside covers, which, acting as a mirror, facilitates reading the reversed texts.

Today, Grant is on her way to having a long career as an artist. Her work is in the permanent collection of the Museum of Contemporary Art (in Los Angeles) as well as in private collections. She is in demand as a lecturer and teacher. Although she is delighted that her life has become financially more stable, she speaks with pride of the beginning of her career, when her works were too large to be economically profitable: “I always protected my art practice



In 2004, Grant created *nimbus I* (after Michael Joyce’s “Nimbus”), a rotating silver-wire ball of text. Grant’s works at the time—20-foot spider webs of language—were so huge that they could not be moved and so were virtually uncollectible.

from becoming like a widget factory. Many artists start to make widgets of their own work, so that they can sell a lot—and the pressure to do that is unbelievable.” Rather than succumb to galleries’ demands for many, small, easy-to-produce works, she says, “My response was to double the size, go the opposite direction, push the bounds. I’ve been told that I am a museum artist—that my work is predominantly engaged in presenting ideas and an experience of language. In MOCA—and with the curator Alma Ruiz—I did end up finding the ideal institution.”

Grant warns against falling prey to public demands and following fashion. “Many artists make fashionable work,” she says, “but what happens when that particular style is no longer popular?” In order to create the best possible work for the MOCA exhibit, she spent two years working solely on pieces for the show.

Grant admits that she loves the interaction with a greater public that showing her work within the context of the museum has brought. Still, she says, her true success has always been and will continue to be in the intellectual exchanges—whether with Joyce, Rothenberg, Cixous, or with any other of the many individuals she names in the long list of acknowledgements at the end of the exhibit catalog. “And there need be no end to that,” she says. “No roof—just limitless.”

# WHERE CAN WE GO WITHOUT REASON?

By Jeffrey Lott

When we spoke in July with Braulio Muñoz, the Eugene M. Lang Research Professor of Sociology, he described his recent visit to Lake Titicaca and Bolivia. It's the site of the Tiwanaku culture, one of the oldest pre-Columbian civilizations on the continent. He told me that his mother "is my connection to this pre-Columbian world."

Born in Peru, Muñoz received a B.A. in sociology from the University of Rhode Island in 1973 and, in quick succession, a master's and Ph.D. from the University of Pennsylvania. He has taught at Swarthmore since 1978.

Muñoz teaches social theory, social philosophy, sociology of culture, and courses on Latin American society, culture, and literature. He recently published his second novel, *The Peruvian Notebooks* (University of Arizona Press, 2006)—his first work of fiction written in English. He is currently working on two academic books and another novel. We started with a question about his sense of place.

*What's the first thing that comes to mind when I say "home"?*

Community—my community of scholars, whether here or Paris or Rome or Lima. My identity as a Swarthmore professor is both local and international. But had I been a peasant, the first thing to come to mind would still have been community.

*What about "heaven"?*

Understanding—the ability to recognize value in difference. Heaven would be a place where there is understanding across difference.

*Are you a religious person?*

Kant, who clarified for us the idea of reason, said that it's rational to strive for community. I am a rational being. Therefore, if religion's highest purpose is understanding the other and the creation of community, then being religious is also a form of reason. Does that answer your question?

*As both a social theorist and an immigrant, why do you think there's such a disturbance in American society about immigration?*

America has always been like this—as each succeeding new group has been accepted, they have tried to seal America's borders. What's new is the controversy over language. Unlike other cultures, Americans have always been unwilling to learn, or even tolerate, other peoples' languages. We're interested in the free flow of goods and services but not in the free flow of people. It's fear of the other—and ignorance.

*Is classic liberalism still a force in today's world?*

It's in trouble. Liberal democratic values were originally grounded in the enlightenment's universal claims, such as the objectivity of reason and the idea of God making all of us equal. The world is very skeptical of claims that can't be universally accepted across various cultures. Liberalism suffers from this. A society's cultural values cannot be democratically chosen, and it's difficult to claim any universal values that might be acceptable to everyone.

*Is the United States still a democratic society?*

In general, yes; de Tocqueville was right. It's one of the most democratic countries around. But we don't deal with the world democratically. Our foreign policy caters to interests, not values. A dangerous anti-democratic distinction has arisen between our political leadership and the underlying egalitarian ethos of the American people.

*What's the most important thing for a student to learn during four years at Swarthmore?*

That there are no problems that he or she cannot attempt to solve. Nothing is so intractable that it is beyond understanding. But you must approach the world with humility and honesty. Teaching social theory has shown me that if you dedicate time, patience, and honesty, you'll get through.

*How do you see yourself as a teacher?*

I teach social theory the old-fashioned way. I don't patronize students. I don't water things down. We read the primary sources—the thinkers themselves. I don't lecture; I lead discussions. When the students get lost, I bring them back. If you read the primary sources, you have to separate the wheat from the chaff by yourself. Students like that because, at the end of the process, they can use these theories to their own ends.

*Anything else your students should know?*

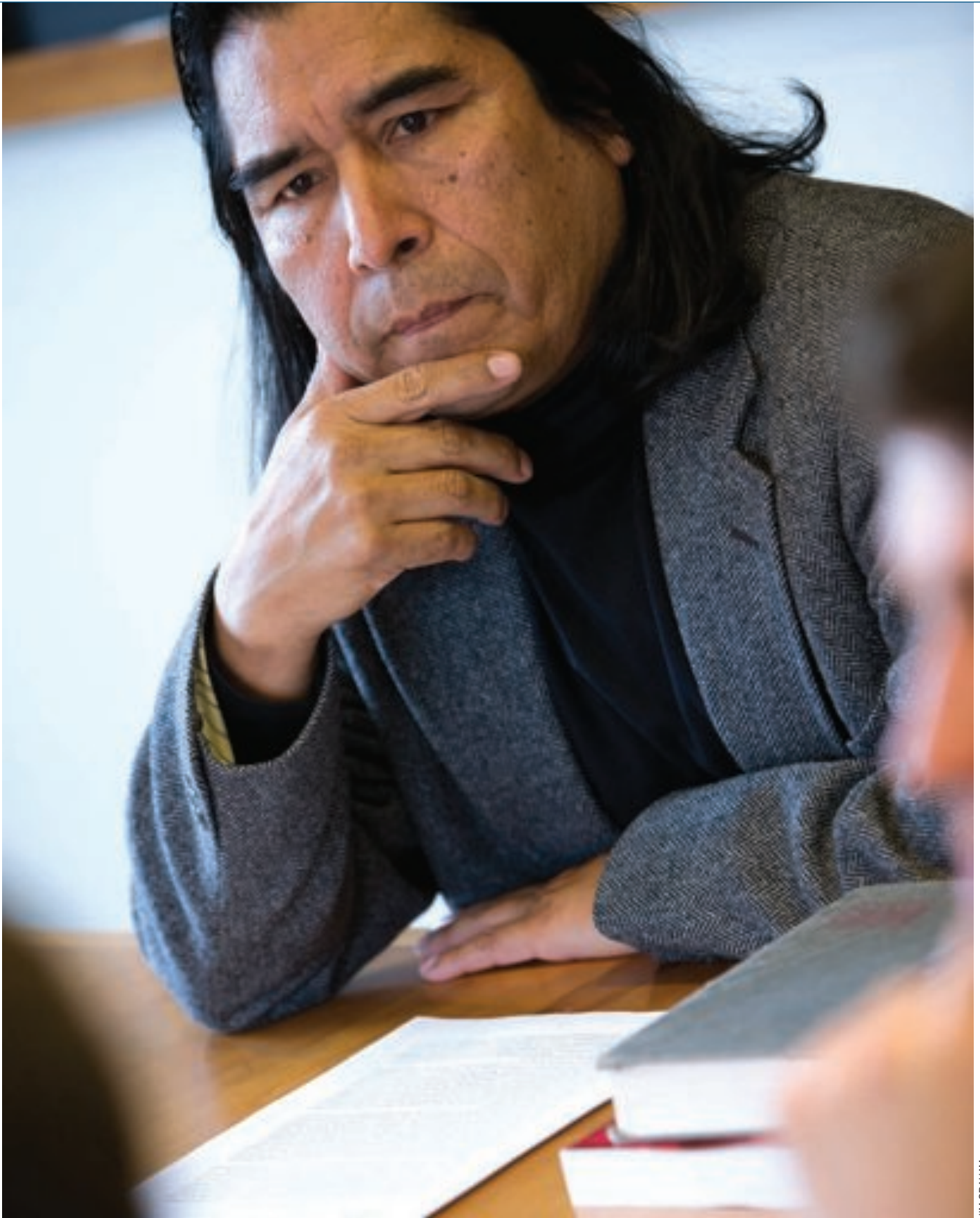
I appreciate the beauty of a well-reasoned argument.

*As a novelist, which authors have been major influences?*

Kafka, for his ability to make the unbelievable appear common; Borges, for his deft, economical use of Spanish; Juan Rulfo, whose one small book *Pedro Paramo* uses the language of the common people to talk about great things; and Flaubert. I continue to read Flaubert for his brilliant use of French.

*A reviewer wrote that *The Peruvian Notebooks* "takes the redundancy of a standard immigration story and twists it with a postmodern approach." Can you explain postmodernism?*

In literature, to be postmodern means to have a nonlinear perspective. Time and space are presented as fractured because there is recognition that there is no objective and universal way to represent the world. This also means that there is a questioning of the voices that present the world as neatly organized along clear-cut categories such as good and evil or black and white. As for *The Peruvian Notebooks*, I wanted my readers to think as they read it. I tried to present my protagonist as a multidimensional character, avoiding the Horatio Alger stereotype and its opposite, the drug-running criminal. It is not an easy book. Have you read it? ☞



JIM GRAHAM

Braulio Muñoz teaches social theory the old-fashioned way—he doesn't water things down.

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