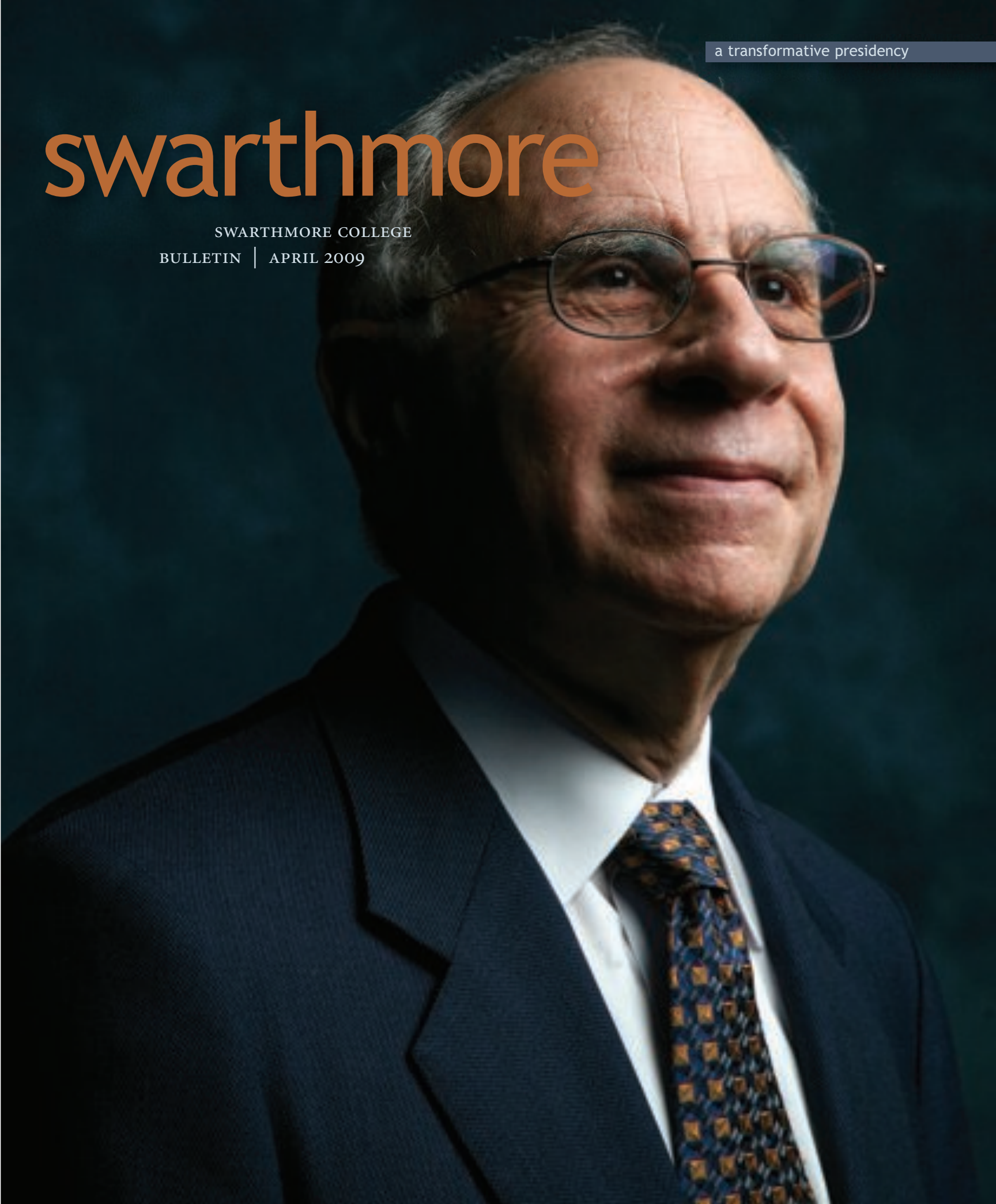
a transformative presidency

swarthmore

SWARTHMORE COLLEGE
BULLETIN | APRIL 2009



ELEFTHERIOS KOSTANS

SWARTHMORE

A slant of sun on a copper dome, a purple beech, and a wave of Blue Wonder (*Nepeta racemosa*). But it's no wonder at all—just spring at Swarthmore.


ELEFTHERIOS KOSTANS

I'll never forget the Saturday in December 2000 when the Board of Managers decided to end Swarthmore's football program. A colleague called from campus and said, "You'd better get up here." That evening, I covered a protest on the steps of Parrish Hall and saw Coach Pete Alvanos weeping as he stood at the microphone.

The next day, President Alfred H. Bloom and Provost Jennie Keith (who chaired the Athletics Review Committee that brought the recommendation to the Board) had planned a private meeting with student athletes to break the news. But because word had already spread on campus—and beyond—the private session became a raucous public circus in the Tarble Pavilion with hundreds of people, TV cameras, and angry shouting from players and their families. This was not the sort of discourse that Bloom had in mind and, in the end, he left grim-faced and shaken. I remember thinking, "This could be the beginning of the end of Al's presidency." I was dead wrong; there was so much more to accomplish in the eight-and-a-half years that remained.

I remember thinking, "This could be the beginning of the end of Al's presidency." I was dead wrong; there was so much more to accomplish in the eight-and-a-half years that remained.

During his second year as president, I wrote a profile of Al that summed up his qualities in four ways: connection, community, change, and the life of the mind. ("The Essential Alfred H. Bloom," May 1993 *Bulletin*)

About connection, I wrote: "For the gregarious, voluble 47-year-old president, connections are easily made and come in many different forms. There are intellectual, professional, and social connections, but most important for Bloom are the personal ones. He seems to make them with everyone."

Regarding community: "For Bloom, community doesn't end at the edge of campus. The College's ever-widening circles include Chester and Philadelphia and, ultimately, America and the world. Bloom's idea of community is diverse, multiracial, and multicultural. It works hard to embrace those who have been outside society's mainstream."

About change: "Bloom is committed to developing in Swarthmore students the ability to be 'thoughtful, sensitive agents of social change.' He wants the College's graduates to ... 'put their intellectual skills to the task of bringing about a better world, no matter what career path they choose.'"

And the life of the mind: "Ultimately, he suggests, it is ideas, not skills, that will move society forward.... He is an intellectual, a man for whom learning and the exchange of ideas are among the principal joys of life."

These essentials have remained remarkably constant throughout his presidency—and most likely since he joined the faculty 36 years ago as an assistant professor of linguistics. By almost any measure, he has had a remarkably successful presidency—"A Transformative Presidency," as Lawrence Schall '75 writes (p. 26). We congratulate Al and wish him every future success as he takes on the new challenge of leading a new New York University campus in Abu Dhabi. No one seems better qualified for this task.

In fact, at the close of my 1993 interview with Al, I asked about his intellectual interests. What would he be doing if he had the time? His reply: "Learning Arabic."

—*Jeffrey Lott*

ON THE COVER: Alfred H. Bloom will leave office on June 30 after 18 years as Swarthmore's president. Story on page 26. Photograph by Eleftherios Kostans.

swarthmore
COLLEGE BULLETIN

EDITOR
Jeffrey Lott

ASSOCIATE EDITOR
Carol Brévart-Demm

CLASS NOTES EDITOR
Susan Cousins Breen

ART DIRECTOR
Suzanne DeMott Gaadt, Gaadt Perspectives LLC

STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
Eleftherios Kostans

DESKTOP PUBLISHING SPECIALIST
Audree Penner

PUBLICATIONS INTERN
Katie Becker '10

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT
Janice Merrill-Rossi

EDITOR EMERITA
Maralyn Orbison Gillespie '49

CONTACTING SWARTHMORE COLLEGE

COLLEGE OPERATOR
(610) 328-8000 www.swarthmore.edu

ADMISSIONS
(610) 328-8300 admissions@swarthmore.edu

ALUMNI RELATIONS
(610) 328-8402 alumni@swarthmore.edu

PUBLICATIONS
(610) 328-8568 bulletin@swarthmore.edu

REGISTRAR
(610) 328-8297 registrar@swarthmore.edu

WORLD WIDE WEB
www.swarthmore.edu

CHANGES OF ADDRESS

Send address label along with new address to:
Alumni Records Office
Swarthmore College
500 College Avenue
Swarthmore PA 19081-1390
Phone: (610) 328-8435
Or e-mail: alumnirecords@swarthmore.edu.

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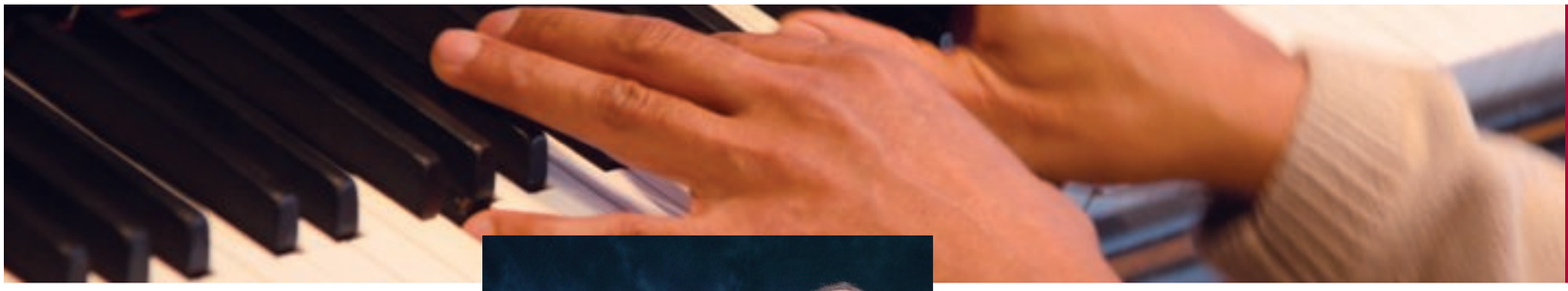

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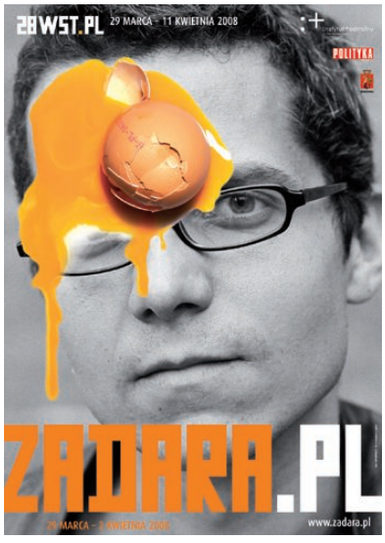

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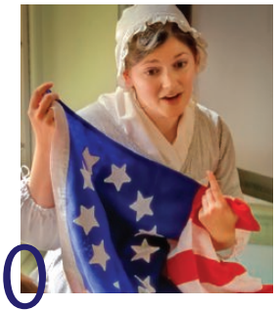
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***Swarthmore College Bulletin* on the Web:** This issue and more than 10 years of archives are at www.swarthmore.edu/bulletin.
On the site, you will also find:


JIM GRAHAM

Rebecca Chopp Watch Rebecca Chopp address College community members in Eldridge Commons after being named President-designate by the College's Board of Managers on Feb. 21. **media.swarthmore.edu/video/?p=157**

Talking Sustainability Listen as Mark Alan Hughes '81 discusses his work as Philadelphia's first sustainability director and its use as a model for Swarthmore's green profile. **media.swarthmore.edu/featured_events/?p=58**

A Scandal in Bohemia Watch Nathalie Anderson, professor of English literature and librettist, and Tom Whitman '82, associate professor of music and composer, discuss their new opera. **media.swarthmore.edu/video/?p=151**

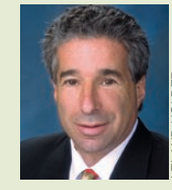
CONTRIBUTORS


ELEFTHERIOS KOSTANS

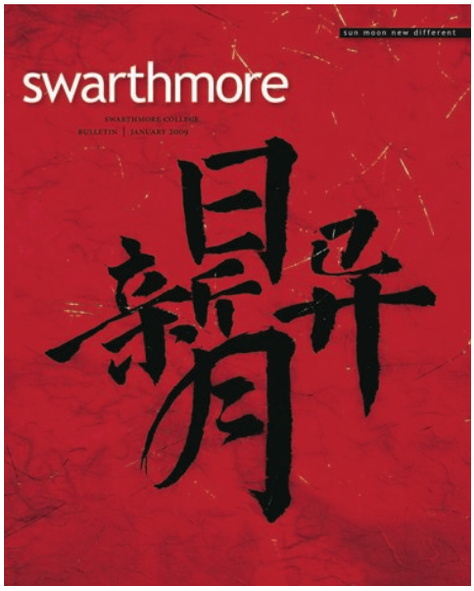
Katie Becker '10, an honors psychology major with a minor in French, is an intern in the Publications Office. She spent the fall 2008 semester studying in Grenoble, France, and intends to return there after graduation to teach English for a year. The Delaware native plans to pursue a career in clinical psychology with the goal of becoming a cognitive therapist. "Word Domination" is Becker's first article for the *Bulletin.*


CLAY GOVIER

Elizabeth Redden '05 is a reporter with *InsideHigherEd.com* in Washington, D.C., where she writes primarily on matters of international education and religion. Last August, she covered the 2008 Democratic National Convention in Denver. An honors English literature major and psychology minor, she spends much of her free time writing and reading nonfiction, in all its many forms.


LELAND HOLDER

Lawrence Schall '75, president of Oglethorpe University since July 2005, spent 14 years serving his alma mater—as associate vice president; vice president for facilities and services; and, finally, vice president for administration. A former civil rights lawyer, Schall holds a J.D. and an Ed.D from the University of Pennsylvania, where he served as co-director of the Executive Doctorate Program in Higher Education.



NOBODY IS "PRO-ABORTION"

I am writing in response to the article, "A Mind on the Right" (January *Bulletin*), which profiled conservative academic Robert George '77. I don't care how smart, well-educated, or well-credentialed someone is, anyone who can say "the most extreme pro-abortion legislator" is either being intentionally misleading or just doesn't get it. No one is pro-abortion. They are pro-choice. That means not that they think abortion is a good thing, but that they believe that the decision whether or not to bear a child should be made in private between a woman and her doctor—and not by the government.

Judy Fletcher '72
Bronx, N.Y.

SWARTHMORE'S LACUNA

It was interesting to hear Robert George talk about how much his students learned when he co-taught a course with Cornel West. Sadly, Swarthmore deprives its students of such an experience, because no professor publicly espouses a reasoned philosophy as different from the status quo as George's. This remains a lacuna that the College should fill with men and women who will force students to question the beliefs and presuppositions that form the skeleton of everything else they believe—to question not just assumptions of race, privilege, and sexuality, but whether truth really is relative, whether there are natural laws written in the universe, or whether matter is the only discernable and knowable force in the world.

Intelligent men and women throughout history have debated these questions, from Aristotle, Thomas Aquinas, and David Hume to Elizabeth Anscombe and Richard Rorty, but during my years at Swarthmore, no faculty member publicly offered radical alternatives to what most students and faculty members took for granted. Having such professors would give Swarthmore students the kind of experience that those at Amherst and Princeton have: a taste of real philosophical and metaphysical diversity, which only deepens one's education.

Nathaniel Peters '07
New York

A WELCOME CHANGE

I could identify very well with your succinct story about Robert George's journey from liberal to conservative, a journey that surprisingly started at Swarthmore and continued later. I also arrived at Swarthmore full of liberal sentiments imparted to me by high-school teachers, pastors, and friends. Through study and a deeper discovery of Christianity, I converted to Catholicism in graduate school and later entered a Cistercian monastery after earning a doctorate. Today, I am happy to be a monk, teaching church history to seminarians. The story about George inspired me, first because of his intellectual prowess, but even more because he is able to communicate the conservative intellectual tradition to today's college students in a compelling way. Thanks for a welcome change in story topics.

Volker Schachenmayr '91
Heiligenkreuz, Austria

NO MAINSTREAM CONSERVATIVE

My daughter attends Swarthmore, and it's clear that the bent of the College is towards a liberal view of politics. The *Swarthmore College Bulletin* has every right to slant in any political direction the College chooses, but if "A Mind on the Right" was intended to somehow balance the liberal politics of the publication, it did not succeed.

Paul Wachter '97 is a skilled wordsmith, but his opinions show through, especially when he writes that "following Barack Obama's landslide and rampant infighting within the Republican ranks, the future of conservatism in this country is uncertain." Obama received just 53 percent of the vote (hardly a landslide), and there was far more "infighting" between Obama and Hillary Clinton than among Republicans.

Professor George comes off as an intelligent and charming man, but he's not what you'd call a mainstream conservative. In fact, his views seem to come out of deep "right field." I haven't heard natural law talked about since I attended Notre Dame 35 years ago.

Professor George comes off as an intelligent and charming man, but he's not what you'd call a mainstream conservative. In fact, his views seem to come out of deep "right field." I haven't heard natural law talked about since I attended Notre Dame 35 years ago. Still, I would have liked a more lucid justification for George's views on natural law. But Wachter tells us, "It's impossible to give these issues and George's views a fair hearing in such limited space"—just before a very long paragraph on George's ideas about sex. I assure you that most conservatives—and Catholics—would strongly disagree with George's medieval views of sex.

The net effect of the article was to paint conservatives as a wacky fringe element of society. Hardly balanced.

Dan Baker
Effort of the Poconos, Pa.

UNEXAMINED ASSUMPTIONS

I never thought much of natural law. It supposedly undergirds ethical systems with self-evident truths. For example, stealing is wrong, according to natural law, because it is inherently destructive of personal or community relations. This is presumably more elemental than saying that stealing is wrong because it is against custom, statutory law, or divine command.

Natural law usually involves unexamined

assumptions. For instance, we may use natural law to condemn white men for stealing Native American land, without questioning whether the taking was theft when the Indians did not think of land as property. Similarly, when the Cheyenne Indians took one another's horses without asking, it was theft in white men's eyes but, at worst, an inconvenience in the Cheyenne worldview. Stealing an enemy's horses or weapons may actually benefit one's community. If this is too tribal a definition of "community"—if the ideal community includes all tribes, the whole human race—why doesn't it include other species, too? We steal from bees all the time and think well of the business. Natural law diction needs to be deconstructed, even though deconstruction undermines natural law's appeal.

Another problem is that natural law usually does not come from nature. For example, nature depends upon theft, as any mosquito will tell you. Natural law ought to be called "rational law," but, in this case, tradition trumps rationality.

Natural law looks innocent on the surface, but it always turns out to be in the service of one predetermined ideology or another, whether it be animal rights, Indian rights, property rights, civil liberty, monarchy, or Roman Catholicism. In Professor George's case, it is evidently the last. Catholicism makes use of natural law to support established doctrine, not to challenge it. The Church uses natural law to oppose contraceptives and abortion but not to oppose regional or global overpopulation.

Richard Frost '51
Santa Fe, N.M.

THE COBBS LEGEND

Only someone from the Class of 1982 (Amy Singer, "Letters," January *Bulletin*) might be horrified or bemused that men weren't allowed in women's dorm rooms after 9 p.m. From 1959 to 1963 at least, it was only from 2 to 6 on Sundays and the door had to be open—six inches it was said—although that may have been a joke that turned into a tradition, as was the supposed requirement of "at least three feet on the floor." Those "do it twice" lines were attributed to Dean Cobbs so often that I almost believe, thinking back 40–50 years, that she actually said them to

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Leo Braudy '63
Los Angeles

P.S. "Susie P." was a nickname for Dean Cobbs that derived from the 1957 Dale Hawkins song *Susie Q*, covered by the Everly Brothers and (after our time) by the Rolling Stones.

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Elizabeth Probasco Kutchai '66
Charlottesville, Va.

DOING IT AGAIN

Although I attended Swarthmore six years after Amy Singer's mother, perhaps I can shed some light: 1. "A soft Southern drawl" was indeed Dean Cobbs's natural voice. 2. The rule then was very distinctly no visiting, period, except for occasional, very limited weekend open-house days, when the door had to be open and all parties needed to have at least one foot on the floor. (I was told things were a little looser in the Mary Lyons dorms.) Regarding curfews and sign-in times for women, as I heard it, the student in question asked Susan Cobbs, "Dean Cobbs, why do we have to sign in by midnight? I mean, if we *want* to do *anything,* we'll have *done* it by then." To which, according to what I heard, Cobbs drawled, "Honey, we're not tryin' to *stop* you from doin' it. We're trying to stop you from doin' it *again.*"

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AND AGAIN!

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Brighton, Mass.

THE CONSTANT REMINDER

Dean Cobbs was ever the constant reminder of politeness, courtesy, and appropriate behavior for a maturing female person. In Singer's letter, I noted the use of "nothin'" to approximate her Southern accent. She was educated and would never have said "nothin'"—it was just hard to hear the final *g* through her cultured Southern accent.

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The Final Interview

REBECCA CHOPP WILL BECOME SWARTHMORE'S 14TH PRESIDENT.

JIM GRAHAM

On Saturday, Feb. 21, at about 10:30 a.m., Rebecca Chopp, president of Colgate University, chatted amicably with Swarthmore's President Alfred H. Bloom in the Kohlberg Hall faculty lounge. As the choice of the Presidential Search Committee, Chopp was about to meet the entire Board of Managers for the first time. She seemed cool and relaxed as she talked with Bloom, his wife Peggi, and other members of President Bloom's senior staff. Her husband, Fred Thibodeau, stood a few feet away, introducing himself to Jim Bock '90, dean of admissions; Stephen Bayer, vice president for development and alumni relations; and others.

A few minutes after the Blooms departed for Courtney Smith House, Board Chair Barbara Mather '65 came to escort Chopp to the nearby Scheuer Room, where the Board sat in near silence. As she entered the room, Chopp got a quick smile and handshake from Neil Grabois '57, who served as Colgate's president from 1988 to 1999. Chopp then sat down between Mather and Tom Spock '78, chair of the Presidential Search Committee, on one side of a large square of tables.

This was the final interview of the final candidate after months of searching, vetting, and deep conversations about who would be Swarthmore's next president.

Introducing Chopp, Mather called her "clearly, far and away our best choice both because of her experience and values." Then Chopp made a brief statement before taking questions from the Managers.

"As a scholar of higher education," she began, "I keep a special folder that I call 'The Heart of the Liberal Arts.' Inside are a small number of essays and speeches that have struck me over the years, that sum up the liberal arts. Most come from people like John Dewey or Maxine Green. But one essay that's been in that folder for several years now is titled 'The Meaning of Swarthmore.' (See the *Bulletin* Web site for this essay.) It's just four or five pages, with some important phrases in bold, like 'the quest for knowledge,' 'a lifelong learning community,' and 'a tradition of excellence.' Those phrases dance through my mind as I sit here. I am so excited to join this community because of your values, because of that tradition of excellence.

"One of my avocations is the study of the abolition movement, and one of my great heroes is Lucretia Mott, who can arguably be called the founder of women's activism in the United States. To know that she was also among the founders of Swarthmore gives me great joy, and I join you with a commitment to having a deliberative and diverse communi-

ty—something that is more important than ever in this new global century.

"In an essay in *Daedalus* a few years ago," Chopp concluded with a nod to Eugene Lang '38, "Gene Lang wrote that the philosophy of the liberal arts and the philosophy of democracy are deeply intertwined and that it is the responsibility of liberal arts colleges to continue the long tradition of educating people who will assume leadership in democratic societies. Our world is going through lots of changes right now, and it's so important for Swarthmore to continue this mission."

Mather then opened the floor for questions from the Managers, one of whom asked Chopp, "What is the most surprising thing you have learned about Swarthmore?"

"In many ways," she replied, "it has fit my own dreams and hopes, but even though I knew it would be true, your clear practices of thorough, deep deliberation and thinking far exceeded any expectations I had. You know, Mr. Lang is a really hard questioner!"

With that, the Managers went into executive session to reach a decision on Swarthmore's new president. Chopp stood with several members of the search committee who were not Managers in the sunny corridor overlooking the Isabelle Bennett Cosby '28 Courtyard for what seemed like an eternity but was, in reality, just a few minutes. Applause emanated from behind the doors of the Scheuer Room, the door swung open, and Swarthmore's 14th president entered to a warm welcome.

—Jeffrey Lott

Breadth and Depth

HOW THE SEARCH COMMITTEE FOUND REBECCA CHOPP.

In an interview with the Bulletin *on Feb. 24, three days after the Board of Managers selected Rebecca Chopp as the College's 14th president, search committee chair Thomas Spock '78 described the applicant pool as "broad and deep." Swarthmore's presidency attracted many applicants. Here's how the choice was made.*

Bulletin: How were the members of the search committee chosen?
Spock: [Board Chair] Barbara Mather ['65] consulted with other Managers and looked at historical precedent before deciding on the composition of the committee. She settled on four Managers (in addition to herself), three faculty members, two students, one other alumnus, and one member of the College staff. Barbara appointed the Board members and the staff and alumni representatives. The Committee on Faculty Procedures selected the three faculty members—one from each of the academic divisions—and the students were appointed by the Student Council.

Were they expected to represent their own constituencies?
The Board's charge to the committee stipulated that although we wanted representatives from all major College constituencies, these members were not appointed to advocate the interests of their own constituent groups but rather to consider the interests of the entire College community. They did that without fail. In fact, all of the committee members performed admirably and put an enormous amount of effort into the search. We became an extremely tight-knit group, able to trust each other implicitly while feeling free to express our honest opinions.

Why did the search committee observe such strict confidentiality?
At Swarthmore, it's in our nature to get input from as many people as possible, and every committee member chafed under the need to keep our work so confidential. The idea of an open process, with a parade of candidates making public appearances, is very attractive in theory. But in reality, the candidate pool we wanted did not allow for that. You cannot attract high-profile candidates if it's known that they are pursuing a new job. None of the strongest candidates in our pool would have applied had we not promised confidentiality throughout the process.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JIM GRAHAM

President-designate Rebecca Chopp addresses members of the College community on Feb. 21, the day she was selected by the Board of Managers to be Swarthmore's next president.

Can you describe the pool of candidates? Was there sufficient diversity?
We had applications from more than a dozen sitting presidents of other institutions. There were provosts and deans from the biggest-name colleges and research universities in the country. It was very gratifying that Swarthmore was attracting this caliber of people. From the very beginning, we did everything possible to make sure we had a very diverse pool. In this we were successful enough that we felt we had the luxury of sitting back and deciding on the best person without worrying about race, gender, or ethnicity.

How did you narrow the field?
In October and November, we thoroughly discussed about 90 applications from the best-qualified candidates, eventually identifying about a dozen whom we wanted to interview in person. And for two days in December, the entire committee conducted 90-minute interviews with each. We then made a lengthy series of reference calls. We talked with board chairs, faculty members, students, colleagues—anyone who could tell us more about how they worked and were regarded in their institutions. We ended up with three finalists, each of whom we felt was fully qualified to be Swarthmore's next president.

Were the finalists seen by anyone outside the search committee?
At this critical point, we knew we needed input from other members of the College community. Each finalist met for 90 minutes with a panel of 13 faculty members and for an hour with a group of 10 students. Members of the search committee observed these meetings and thoroughly debriefed the panelists. The final three also met members of the president's senior staff, who were in turn debriefed by the committee. By the end of this process, each finalist had met with about 45 members of the College community.

When did it appear that you had reached consensus about Rebecca Chopp?
After all of these meetings with members of the community, the search committee met one last time with each of the three finalists, then began to deliberate. We had three very strong candidates, each of whom would have made a great president. But it didn't take long to reach a consensus that we had someone special in Dr. Chopp.

—Jeffrey Lott

Chopp has been president of Colgate University since 2002. She and her husband, Fred Thibodeau, met the faculty and staff and some students at an informal reception.

Rebecca Chopp at a Glance

- Selected as Swarthmore's 14th president, Feb. 21, 2009
- Will take office July 1
- First woman to hold the job

Career
- President, Colgate University, 2002–2009
- Dean, Yale Divinity School, 2001–2002
- Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs, Emory University, 1997–2001
- Dean of Faculty and Academic Affairs, Candler School of Theology, Emory University, 1993–1997
- Professor of Theology, Emory University, 1986–1997
- Professor, University of Chicago Divinity School, 1982–1986
- Ordained by the United Methodist Church, 1977

Education
- Ph.D., University of Chicago Divinity School, 1983
- M.Div., St. Paul School of Theology, 1977
- B.A., Kansas Wesleyan University, 1974

Books
- *Saving Work: Feminist Practices of Theological Education*
- *The Power to Speak: Feminism, Language, God*
- *The Praxis of Suffering: An Interpretation of Liberation and Political Theologies*

Personal
- Born Salina, Kan. Age 57
- Married to Fred Thibodeau, a former fundraiser in higher education and also an ordained Methodist minister who has served a parish in Hamilton, N.Y. He plans to retire in June 2009.
- Children: Chopp's son Nate is 32. Thibodeau has two sons, Matt (35) and Mike (30).
- Chopp is an avid reader of "fiction, philosophy, history, and biographies." She loves to hike and works out "at least six days a week." Her guilty pleasures: an occasional Hostess Snowball and ice cream.
- Thibodeau plans to become involved in a church in the Swarthmore community. Chopp is looking forward to visiting the Friends Meeting House on campus.

To learn more about President-designate Chopp and watch her first public address on campus, visit www.swarthmore.edu/newpresident.

Board Postpones Key Budget Decisions

At its February meeting, Swarthmore's Board of Managers usually approves the College's budget for the upcoming fiscal year that begins on July 1. But this year, the Board decided to consider the 2009–2010 budget in phases.

On Feb. 21, the Board made decisions on student charges, enrollment, financial aid, and capital projects. It deferred decisions on the remainder of the budget, including compensation and departmental budgets, until its May meeting.

According to Vice President for Finance and Treasurer Suzanne Welsh, the Managers wanted to have "as much information as possible about the economy and its impact on the endowment, students' and families' financial situations, and our donors' ability to give" before finalizing next year's budget.

Student charges for the academic year 2009–2010 will rise 3.76 percent—the lowest increase in 10 years. Total charges for tuition, student activities, room, and board will be $49,600. The Board reaffirmed its 2007 decision to give "loan-free" financial aid awards to all aided students. Suggested summer earnings and term-time work components of financial aid awards will remain the same as the current fiscal year.

The target for on-campus enrollment will be 1,406 students, an increase of 16. The target for the entering Class of 2013 will be 390 students. The College also expects to accept 27 transfer students in the upper classes, mostly sophomores.

The Board approved a significant reduction in capital spending for facilities projects over the next three years. In 2009–2010, facilities projects are expected to be $3.3 million, more than a $5 million reduction from the current fiscal year.

"Because the endowment continues to pay for the largest portion of the budget," Welsh said, "the decline in the value of the endowment necessitates a decline in the dollars available to support the budget. Even with reductions in the budget and capital spending, the endowment spending rate will increase to a level of slightly under 6 percent—the highest spending rate in the College's history. Because of our conservative endowment spending policy, the Board is willing to have a higher spending rate for the short term while we see how this economic crisis unfolds and develop carefully thought-out plans to respond."

In May, the Board will approve salaries and noncompensation department budgets, which together account for more than 80 percent of the College's budget. "Salary freezes for faculty and staff are under strong consideration," Welsh said. "We will also seek savings in noncompensation budgets wherever possible."

—Jeffrey Lott

ELEFTHERIOS KOSTANS

FOCUSING ON THE CLAY

There's nothing quite so elemental as a lump of wet clay—or so magical as seeing skilled hands turn that spinning lump into a beautiful vessel. Doug Herren, studio technician for the Art Department, is a teacher of this magic, which a dozen students in this spring's class The Potter's Wheel variously describe as "very physical," "a little stressful," and "a pretty steep learning curve." The first assignment, just completed, was to make four six-inch tall cylinders and four cups with handles. Today's task is to make a bowl.

Potters call working on the wheel "throwing," and Herren, who demonstrates technique at the beginning of each class, says, "Learning to throw is hard. You need to build up dexterity and strength. It's all about getting hands-on in the very first class." For nine years, he taught part time at Rowan University and is happy to be full-time at Swarthmore, where he works primarily in the clay studio but also supports other Art Department faculty and students with their projects. He's serving as a visiting assistant professor this year because Professor of Studio Art Syd Carpenter is on leave.

The Potter's Wheel is the first art course for Ben Hopkins '09, a history major and economics minor now in his last semester at Swarthmore. He calls it "a nice way to relieve stress—to blank out and become thoughtless for a couple hours." Then he's off to multivariable calculus or advanced econometrics.

The studio is open 24 hours a day. That suits many students, who like to come in late at night, turn up some music, and throw. "It's relaxing compared to my other classes, but I was a little nervous," says Alexis Hickman '11. "I had never taken a course like this before—even in high school. Everything I throw is a little uneven."

Senior psychobiology major Juliana Macri found the wheel particularly daunting. "The first time was disastrous," she says. But as she learns, she says, her mind "gets really focused on the clay and what it's doing. I'm a perfectionist, so I spend a lot of time trying to make things perfectly smooth and circular. This is something I should probably stop doing—sometimes things that aren't perfect are more interesting."

—Jeffrey Lott

DIANE MATTIS

HORTICULTURAL CREATIVITY HARVESTS REWARDS

Claire Sawyers, the creative force behind the astonishing achievements of the Scott Arboretum in the last two decades, has received dual recognition for her work. The 2008 Zone V Horticulture Commendation from the Garden Club of America acknowledges Sawyers's "dedication and excellence in furthering the education and enjoyment of people everywhere in the growing and displaying of plants." The 2009 Professional Award from the American Horticultural Society's Great American Gardens Awards Committee recognizes Sawyers as "a public garden administrator whose achievements during the course of her career have cultivated widespread interest in horticulture and made a difference in the landscape around us."

"Claire has led the Scott Arboretum into a revitalized, and invigorated era," says Alice Hamilton Farley, landscape architect and president of the Wissahickon (Pa.) Garden Club. "She has created a place where the average homeowner and beginning gardener can go and see a place of beauty and, also, come away with ideas that they can bring to their own gardens."

—Susan Cousins Breen

green power

TOWN GREEN

The Borough of Swarthmore was honored by the Environmental Protection Agency in January with a 12th-place ranking among green-power communities nationwide. Of the top 19 communities earning a place on the list, Swarthmore was the only town so recognized east of the Mississippi River—other towns in the top 12 are located in California, Washington, Utah, and Colorado.

With a long history of environmentally responsible behavior, the Ville boasts an unusually high number of residents who have signed up for wind power provided by energy supplier PECO at a slightly higher monthly rate. Many others have opted for solar energy. And, of course, the borough's most important green-power customer, the College, positively impacts the borough's environmental record by its own considerable renewable energy consumption.

GOWN GREEN

In fall 2008, Earthlust, the College's longstanding student environmental group, was invited to join the Environmental Protection Agency's Green Power Partnership, in recognition of its efforts to promote the use of green energy on campus. The Green Power Partnership comprises a wide variety of organizations nationwide, including a growing number of colleges and universities as well as Fortune 500 companies and local, state, and federal government agencies.

In a Dec. 21 e-mail message to Maurice Eldridge '61, the College's vice president for college and community relations and executive assistant to the president, Earthlust member William Zein Nakhoda '12 wrote: "The partnership will help publicize our current green energy initiatives and provide resources to improve our environmental performance. We are very excited about the recognition Swarthmore will receive for its sustainability as well as the opportunities to improve."

—Carol Brévart-Demm

An Index of Well-Being

TRAVIS LAMPE

Imagine a scenario where U.S. domestic policy is defined less by profit, consumerism, accumulation of wealth, and self-interest than by a desire for general well-being. Sound utopian? Maybe. Yet according to Barry Schwartz, Dorwin P. Cartwright Professor of Social Theory and Social Action, the idea is by no means far-fetched. In fact, it's one he's been mulling over for quite a while—ever since he read an article by Martin Seligman, director of the University of Pennsylvania's Positive Psychology Center, and Ed Diener, a professor of psychology at the University of Illinois and world expert on studies of well-being.

"They suggested that we need some kind of measure to replace, or at least counterbalance, the current measures of gross domestic product (GDP)—a measure of gross national well-being," Schwartz says.

Although wealth has a considerable impact on life satisfaction, its effect begins to diminish after a certain point, Schwartz says. Yet U.S. economic policy and the American psyche are both tuned to devote a tremendous amount of time and effort into increasing per capita wealth. The two main reasons for this, Schwartz explains, are that people can use money to buy whatever makes them happy, so it becomes a kind of proxy for everything else; moreover, money can easily be measured, whereas the measure of well-being is more difficult to define.

"My take on this," says Schwartz, "is that GDP is not only inadequate, but that policies aimed at increasing per capita wealth may be implemented yet are counterproductive because they get in the way of other things that really do make people happy, more satisfied, and able to lead more meaningful lives." And it's now, in a time of economic crisis, that Schwartz believes that psychology could be at least as useful as economics in figuring out how to reduce the fear, anxiety, and distrust that have grown in Americans today and foster a more contented society, in which striving for monetary profit is countered, maybe even diminished, by altruism and desire to do the right thing.

"Fear, anxiety, and distrust are all psychological states," Schwartz says. "These are not easy problems to solve, but when the solutions come, they're not going to come from economists. It became quite clear to me, not only that we ought to be worrying about well-being in general but that we need to be listening to psychologists—to solve even economic problems. How do you get people to spend more? To save more? How do people track their wealth? Make spending and saving choices? When and why do they feel secure or insecure? We know a lot about that, and it could influence the way in which policy is shaped to promote savings or spending or whatever needs to be promoted."

Moving beyond the national economy, Schwartz considered President Barack Obama's domestic policy objectives on energy, education, and health care and realized that invariably questions arise for which psychology can provide meaningful answers.

"A Council of Psychological Advisors would have something useful to say about every single domestic issue that President Obama seems to think about," Schwartz says. Schwartz envisions a group of six or seven experts in all the main areas of policy—a "stable of psychologists" on call to add their expertise to whatever problem is currently on the table. He is cautiously optimistic about the proposal, particularly because he recognizes in the new president someone who is willing to listen to new ideas.

"President Obama's mind is already open and prepared for the sorts of things I think psychologists could contribute to," Schwartz says.

And Washington is already nibbling. After publishing an article about his thoughts in the *Philadelphia Inquirer* and in a blog he keeps on the *Psychology Today* Web site, Schwartz received a message in early February from a staff member at the Center for American Progress—a liberal think tank dedicated to developing ideas to help shape policy—inviting him to expand upon his ideas.

"We'll see what transpires, but it's more response than I expected to get," Schwartz says.

You can find Barry Schwartz's Psychology Today *blog at www.swarthmore.edu/x17560.xml.*

HOW PSYCHOLOGY DRIVES THE ECONOMY

Who could possibly imagine that the outcome of a soccer tournament could have an

effect on economic perceptions? Sounds wacky? Not according to Assistant Professor of Economics David Huffman, an expert in the relatively new field of behavioral and experimental economics.

In a 2006 paper, Huffman and three fellow economists showed that the outcome of the FIFA World Cup, held in Germany that year, systematically affected "individual perceptions about economic prospects, both on a personal and economy-wide level."

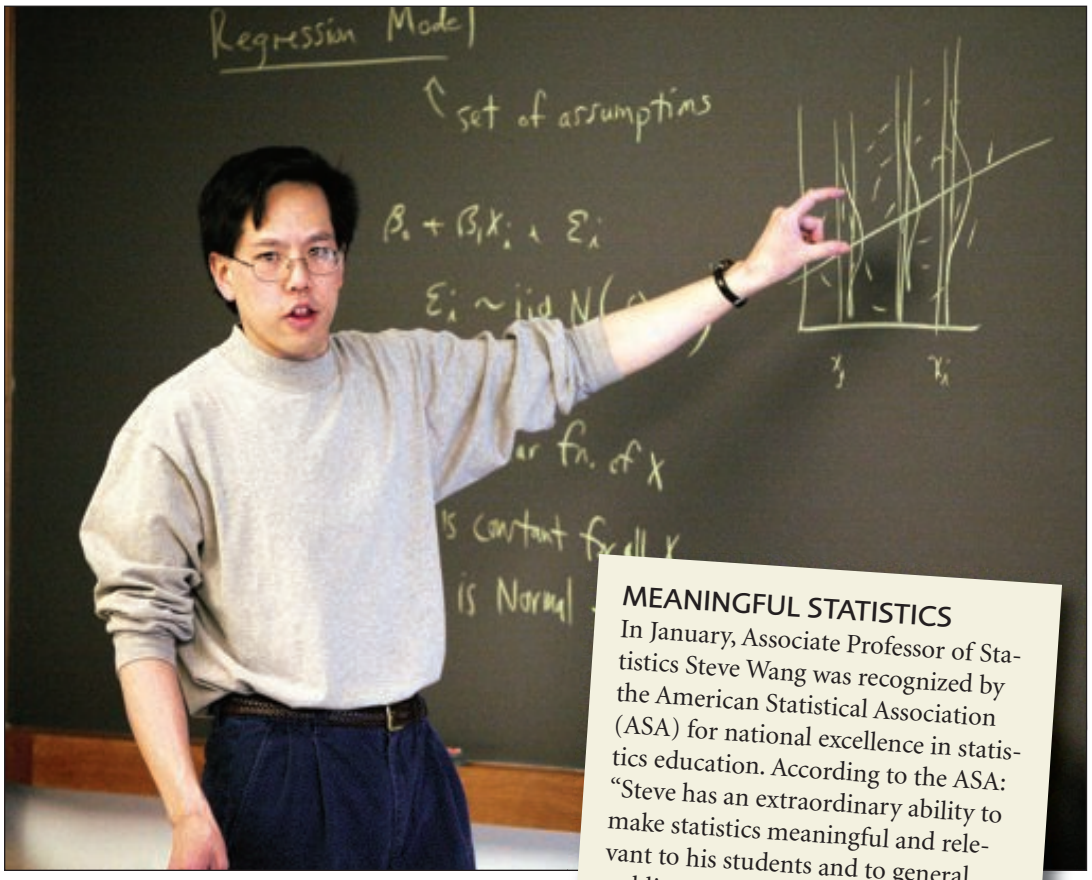
Using the international soccer tournament as a natural experiment, the group conducted interviews, soliciting opinions on economic expectation from 3,231 Germans. Each interviewee was contacted once before the tournament began and again after each of the seven matches in which the German team competed. The results indicated that "the unexpectedly good performance of the German soccer team [seeded 19th before the tournament and finishing in third place] improved both economic perceptions and expectations."

The authors concluded that their data implied strongly that "much of the economic action is driven by psychology." In 2007, Huffman, as co-author of another paper, wrote that the inability of economic models to accurately predict important aspects of the labor market is attributable to their failure to take emotion into consideration.

Huffman has incorporated his ideas into two courses this year: the fall semester seminar Behavioral Economics and the spring semester course Experimental Economics. He says that although he's interested in human psychology for its own sake, as an economist he remains primarily focused on economic decision-making and understanding how markets work, using psychology to help further that understanding.

Putting his scholarship to work in the classroom, Huffman invites students to participate in hands-on research in the area of decision-making and risk-taking. "We offer different safe or risky options, involving real money, and try to see how willing someone is to take a risk and why or why not," he says.

"The hallmark of an economic experiment, as opposed to a psychology experiment, is that we use money. We're maybe too much obsessed with money or having money be involved, partly because it makes it more like a real economic decision. The amounts are not gigantic, but it is real money."



ELEFTHERIOS KOSTANS

Huffman's research reveals intriguing relationships between risk taking and personal traits. For instance, people who are taller are more willing to take risks. "It's well known from previous research that taller people tend to earn higher wages," says Huffman, "and one explanation has always been that height fosters self-confidence. Perhaps the greater risk tolerance of tall people also reflects this confidence effect. Of course there are always exceptions, like Napoleon.…"

Hired in 2008 to add his expertise in the up-and-coming field to the College's course offerings, Huffman says: "There's even a bit of backlash against the field now, which means it's being taken relatively seriously. It's a neat field—and, I think, a 'hot' one right now."

—Carol Brévart-Demm

For more information on David Huffman and his research, visit www.swarthmore.edu/x16527.xml.

MEANINGFUL STATISTICS

In January, Associate Professor of Statistics Steve Wang was recognized by the American Statistical Association (ASA) for national excellence in statistics education. According to the ASA: "Steve has an extraordinary ability to make statistics meaningful and relevant to his students and to general public audiences. His use of examples and information from popular culture is one of the hallmarks of his teaching. Recognizing that students have different learning styles, he incorporates multiple modes of instruction on any given topic into his courses, including words, formulas, and hands-on experiences. His students routinely describe his classes as a transformative experience."

He is currently working on discovering the cause or causes of the end-Permian extinction, the most severe mass extinction in the history of life.

Last year, *The New York Times* reported on Wang's innovative study of Major League baseball managers. He also garnered international attention for a study that predicted that most of the world's dinosaurs have yet to be unearthed and that 75 percent of them will be discovered within the next 60 to 100 years.

—Alisa Giardinelli and Carol Brévart-Demm

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ELEFTHERIOS KOSTANS

At a building owned by Widener University, a new college-access center will provide Delaware County, Pa., residents with counseling, mentoring, tutoring, and other resources. Cynthia Jetter '74, a longtime community activist *(below)*, worked to open the center in February.

One-Stop Access to Higher Education

Joyful anticipation filled the air as representatives from six Delaware County colleges and universities and the community gathered on Jan. 27 to launch the College Access Center (CAC) of Delaware County—a one-stop facility in Chester, Pa. According to Cynthia Jetter '74, director of community partnerships and planning for Swarthmore's Lang Center for Civic and Social Responsibility and the driving force behind the Center—its mission is to address the educational needs of county residents.

The center, which is supported by volunteers from the founding institutions and the community, opened its doors for business on Feb. 2 in a building owned by Widener University. It provides free services to students beginning in sixth grade and continuing through their senior year of high school and to adults wishing to pursue or complete a college degree. County residents have access to a computer lab and resource room for researching higher education opportunities, and guidance is available for completing online applications and financial aid forms.

The center is the first initiative of the Chester Higher Education Council (CHEC), a new nonprofit organization formed by the presidents of Cheyney University, Delaware County Community College, Neumann College, Penn State–Brandywine, Widener University, and Swarthmore. The first year of operation is bolstered by a $100,000 grant from the United Way of Southeastern Pennsylvania.

Jetter spoke with emotion to the crowd gathered for the ribbon cutting: "I bear witness to the fact that access to information gives access to opportunity. That is why I want these children to feel that they're entitled to a better education."

According to President Alfred H. Bloom, who serves as CHEC treasurer, the Council anticipates that the center will serve 1,000 youth and adults in its first year through school-based programs, community workshops held at the center, and at neighborhood sites. "The center will form partnerships with the 15 school districts in Delaware County," Bloom says.

Jetter expects College staff, faculty, and students to serve as tutors, mentors, and educational program leaders. Currently, she has commitments from the Writing Associates Program to conduct writing workshops, the National Society of Black Engineers to hold SAT prep sessions, multilingual Swarthmore students to work with young students for whom English is not their first language, and the Financial Aid Office to assist with workshops on scholarships and grants.

"This is a great day," said Widener President James Harris III, CHEC chairperson, "because what is going to happen in this house over the next few decades is a dream come true. The universities coordinated their efforts through the Chester Higher Education Council, but it was Cynthia Jetter—the heart and soul of this project—who charged forward and made the access center possible."

—Susan Cousins Breen

DEER CULL DELAYED

A planned deer cull in the College's Crum Woods did not occur this winter due to a policy change in Pennsylvania Game Commission (PGC) regulations that was proposed after the Borough of Swarthmore and adjoining Nether Providence Township applied on behalf of the College for a cull permit. If approved, the new policy will grant landowners culling and controlled hunting rights without the sponsorship of a local municipality.

On the advice of the PGC, the College has since re-applied, as a landowner—independent of the municipalities—for a cull permit. It decided against the suggested option of a controlled hunt, which would be open to the public by special permit, and maintains its stance that a cull by sharpshooters is the most effective way to manage the deer overpopulation that is threatening the ecosystem of the Crum.

In a Jan. 27 interview with the *Daily Gazette's* Lauren Stokes '09, Director of Grounds Jeff Jabco said he believed the delay would give the College a chance to strengthen parts of its proposal. "I'm meeting with some folks from the Game Commission soon…. I'd like to walk the area with them; it will make them more familiar with what we're dealing."

If the application is approved, the College would proceed with the cull next winter.

—Carol Brévart-Demm

Committed to Community Engagement

Swarthmore has been recognized as a leader in community engagement by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching for having "institutionalized community engagement in its identity, culture, and commitments." In the course of a close examination of how widely the College's service learning courses are offered, the foundation also sought information about specific community partnerships such as the Chester Children's Chorus, Chester Children's Gamelan Project, Crum Creek Watershed Partnership, and College Advancement Program.

Joy Charlton, executive director of the College's Lang Center for Civic and Social Responsibility, says: "The Carnegie classification recognizes Swarthmore's heritage and commitment to social responsibility, the resources it has invested, and the exceptional creativity and energetic responses of students, faculty, administration, and alumni to community issues and needs, as they've found them. Swarthmore is particularly well-known for its signature programs now housed in the Lang Center and how our students are encouraged to think in big ways."

COLIN PURRINGTON

Happy Birthday, Dear Darwin

About 100 celebrants dined on bananas or banana cake, and many had their pictures taken with a life-size cutout of Charles Darwin on Feb. 12, the 200th anniversary of the great scientist's birth. The Darwin Day celebration included evolution-themed temporary tattoos; "pin the beak on the sparrow;" and a rousing chorus of "Happy Birthday, Dear Darwin" led by Colin Purrington, associate professor of biology, who organized the event. Why bananas and banana cake? "All primates love bananas," Purrington says.

Showing some love for the father of evolutionary science are professors Amy Cheng Vollmer (*left*) and Sara Hiebert Burch '79.

COURTESY OF NATHALIE ANDERSON

"I loved this workshop," says Nathalie Anderson. "I hope many more folks from the faculty and staff will take advantage of it, because these glimpses into people's lives and hearts are so very intriguing, so very moving."

The Age-old Art of Storytelling Goes Digital

Recently, Professor of English Literature Nathalie Anderson shared a piece of very personal information via a poem she wrote and an old photo album that belonged to her mother. One photo shows Anderson's mother and the shadow of the man she was going out with during World War II—a pilot stationed in the Pacific, "before she met my father," Anderson says. The poem focuses on the man's shadow.

" … his shape an arrow arrowing, a missile fixed, so phallic/ you'd laugh too: her shoulder with leafy shade corsaged;/ the edge of the bridge darkening his dark, a scarfing;/ her coat swayed at the hem from the thought of the thrust of him," Anderson writes.

Together, poem and photos tell a story, each enlivening the other. Using software and a microphone, Anderson captured her story digitally for viewing on the Internet—as a participant in a digital storytelling workshop, the third on campus facilitated by Chief Information Technology Officer Gayle Barton.

After listening to a conference speaker talk about digital storytelling workshops in 2001, Barton—at the time still director of institutional technology at Williams College—says, "I was so taken by what he was saying and what he was doing—I really did feel a bit as if I'd drunk the Kool-Aid."

Barton invited Joe Lambert, who founded the Center for Digital Storytelling (CDS) in Berkeley, Calif., in 1994, to hold a three-day workshop at Williams College, during which participants compiled an original script based on a personal experience, then recorded the script to produce the voice-over for a video created with photos or other fitting images.

The success of the Williams workshop encouraged Barton, who came to Swarthmore in 2007, to initiate a similar event at the College last June. Since then, two further workshops have taken place, with a total attendance of 29, comprising 14 faculty and 16 staff, one of whom attended twice. At the end of the workshop, participants shared their final products and celebrated each others' stories.

The workshops began with a group session during which all participants discussed their story ideas and brainstormed ways to present them.

Web Multimedia Specialist Nathan Stazewski said: "I was a little hesitant about the whole storytelling aspect, being much more interested in learning tips and tricks for Final Cut, the video editing software we used in the workshop and which I recently started using to edit videos for my job. The group was really helpful in pulling out the most interesting parts of a story. My original piece was a little long, but the facilitators were wonderful in showing me how to determine the true meat of the story. I've found the process to be very helpful as I create videos for my job."

Some academic departments now use digital storytelling as a teaching tool. Associate Professor of French Carina Yervasi and lecturer in Spanish Joan Friedman have both had students compile digital stories.

As well as enhancing the opportunities for creative academic learning, Barton believes that digital storytelling technology can also help people become more comfortable using technology and encourage them to think about different forms of communication.

"What makes it really exciting for me, though," says Barton, "is that I see it as a tremendous community builder. You can sit in a room with eight or 10 people, whom you may have met but don't know well, and you go through this workshop together and learn something about each other, some story they have that's important enough for them to want to spend three days on it—and you get to know them."

—Carol Brévart-Demm

"Gloria Was Awesome!"

During the first weeks of the spring semester, the bulletin board for international students in the main hall of Parrish was festooned with colored notes containing tributes and messages of gratitude to beloved International Student Adviser Gloria Evans, aged 81, whose unexpected Dec. 25 death due to complications from knee surgery saddened campus community members.

Evans was "awesome"; "always hip and modern"; "our mom away from home"; "elegant, gracious, and full of warmth," the students wrote. She went "far beyond her role as adviser" and had "a smile that lit up [her] face, even when I knew [she] was tired," to quote but few.

Obtaining a Ph.D. from Stanford University, Evans came to Swarthmore in 1957 as an assistant professor of psychology. She remained at the College for more than 50 years, serving as a faculty member, testing and guidance consultant, and ultimately adviser to international students and visiting scholars. While at Swarthmore, she met her husband, the late physician Philip Evans '48—for whom the College's Evans Scholarship is named—and also served on the advising team for Evans Scholars during their years at Swarthmore.

As international student adviser, Evans, an enthusiastic traveler, especially to Europe, went to great lengths to ensure that foreign students felt comfortable at the College. She taught an English for Foreign Students course, served on a Foreign Students Committee, and counseled international students on immigration and visa issues as well as other aspects of living and studying in a foreign country. She initiated a three-day program of activities specifically for international students—that preceded the regular three-day freshman orientation—to help them adjust to life in the United States.

During their orientation, Evans met each foreign student and any relatives who accompanied them to Swarthmore. She became an invaluable resource and friend to the students throughout their college lives. For those who came to the College without many of the typical student necessities, too heavy or bulky to transport by air, she facilitated shopping expeditions to Target and other nearby stores.

"Thank you, Gloria, for everything," Michael Xu '11, president of the campus international student club, wrote on the notice board. "We will all miss you!"

—Carol Brévart-Demm

ELEFTHERIOS KOSTANS

Popular international student adviser Gloria Evans died suddenly on Dec. 25. During her long tenure at the College, Evans went to tremendous lengths to help foreign students adjust both culturally and physically to life in the United States. Not only did she initiate a special orientation period for international students but she also went out of her way to organize shopping excursions to local stores, enabling them to obtain everyday items they were unable to bring with them from their homes.

ONWARD AND UPWARD

The Board of Managers approved the promotion of five members of the faculty from associate to full professor: Biologist Sara Hiebert Burch '78 studies hypometabolic states in small birds and mammals. Linguist Ted Fernald is a semanticist interested in, among other topics, all things to do with Navajo syntax and semantics. English literature scholar Nora Johnson specializes in the Renaissance, particularly Shakespeare and theater history, also teaching courses on Milton, comedy, 20th-century lesbian fiction, and other topics. Organic chemist Paul Rablen's laboratory research focuses on fundamental questions about the relationship between structure, stability, and reactivity in organic compounds, and on the mechanistic pathways of organic reactions. Film-and-media–studies scholar Patricia White is a graduate of Yale's first class of film studies majors and author or editor of three books on cinema—with one in progress on global women filmmakers.

Two faculty members were promoted from assistant to associate professor: Physicist Catherine Crouch, whose research explores the technique of microphotoluminescence, was promoted to associate professor of physics with continuous tenure. Psychologist Jane Gillham, whose major research and clinical interests include clinical psychology, developmental psychology, and education, was promoted, in a nontenured position, from assistant to associate professor of psychology.

—Carol Brévart-Demm

ELEFTHERIOS KOSTANS

Showers of Medals for Garnet Swimmers

Men's swimming (second at CC Championships) Senior Douglas Gilchrist-Scott collected seven medals at the Conference Championship meet, breaking a 12-year-old Conference and championship meet record (along with his own school mark) with a 46.48 time during the preliminaries of the 100-yard freestyle. He went on to earn a bronze medal in the event, clocking in at 47.20 during the finals. Gilchrist-Scott also set a school record in the 50-yard backstroke (24.66) as the lead leg in the silver-medal 200-yard medley and another new mark in the 50-yard freestyle (21.39), earning bronze medals in the 50-yard free and the 100-yard backstroke. Gilchrist-Scott also played an important role on the Swarthmore relay squads, which brought home three silver medals and one bronze. His anchor leg in the 400-yard medley relay capped a school-record performance (3:32.02) that included teammates Santiago Lombo '11, Sterling Satterfield '11, and Sam Bullard-Sisken '12. Gilchrist-Scott led off the 200-medley relay squad of Satterfield, Bullard-Sisken and freshman Tim Brevart, and he was part of the school-record–breaking 400-yard freestyle relay team—along with Michael Ahn '10, Neil Palmer '12, and Brévart—that earned a silver medal. The aforementioned 200-yard free relay team—with the quartet of Gilchrist-Scott, Brévart, Lance Liu '12, and Ahn—also medaled, collecting a bronze. Long distance freestyler Stephen Shymon '09 brought home a pair of gold medals, winning the 500-yard freestyle and breaking the his own school record in a time of 4:41.03 and then swimming to a seemingly effortless victory in the 1,650-yard freestyle (16:31.72). The dynamite breaststroke duo of Liu and Satterfield posted new College records, both achieving NCAA B-cut times (times that don't automatically but may qualify for participation at the national championship), in the 100- and 200-yard breaststroke events, respectively. Liu collected a silver medal in the 100-yards, posting 58.30 (a school record), and Satterfield earned a bronze with a post of 59.04. Satterfield swam 2:07.46 in the 200-yard breaststroke preliminaries and then lowered the time (2:06.98) in the finals, earning a silver medal.

KYLE LEACH

Women's swimming (third at CC Championships) Junior Anne Miller earned a spot in the 2009 NCAA Division III swimming and diving championships for the third straight year, to be held this year at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis on March 18–21, hosted by Macalester College. Miller led the women's team to a third-place finish, earning NCAA provisional qualifying times in the 100-yard butterfly (57.95) and the 200-yard butterfly (2:06.26). Those two performances earned her silver medals. Sophomore Stephanie Su picked up her first gold medal in the 200-yard breaststroke with a time of 2:30.29. Chelsea Brett '11 won a silver medal in the 200-yard freestyle (1:56.34), and jun-

AURORA IMAGING

Clockwise from top left:

Garnet male swimming captain Douglas Gilchrist - Scott *(third from front)* won seven medals at the Centennial Conference Championships and broke five records

Kathryn Stockbower was one of 42 players in the country to be named a finalist for the 2009 State Farm Coaches' All-America Basketball Team.

Kim Kramer won three consecutive singles and doubles titles at the Pennsylvania State Open. Placing 13th in the National Women's Singles rankings, she was invited by USA Badminton to travel to Iran as part of a goodwill venture in January.

ior Casey Osborn took home a bronze in the 200-yard butterfly, swimming a time of 2:11.55 (her fastest of the season)

Badminton (4-4) Kim Kramer '10, 13th in the national women's singles rankings, was invited by USA Badminton to travel to Iran as part of a good-will venture in January. Kramer has secured three consecutive singles and doubles titles at the Pennsylvania State Open, combining with teammate Maithili Parikh '11 to create one of the most formidable badminton duos in the nation. They reached the semifinals of the women's doubles tournament in the Mid-Atlantic Classic before falling to top-seeded Daphne Chang and Mingzi Zhang.

Men's basketball (3-21, 2-15 CC) The Garnet finished the 2008–2009 season looking strong. They posted victories over Conference playoff teams Gettysburg (an NCAA Tournament participant) and Washington College in the final month of the season. Swarthmore senior forward Raul Ordoñez led the squad with 12.7 points and 8.3 rebounds per game, (third in the Centennial) tying the program record with 22 drawn charges.

Women's basketball (13-12, 10-8 CC) Sophomore forward Kathryn Stockbower, one of 42 players in the country to be named a finalist for the 2009 State Farm Coaches' All-America Basketball Team, led the Centennial Conference in scoring (17.7 points per game) and rebounding (13.6 per game), and was named the Conference Player of the Year. A unanimous First-Team selection, Stockbower tied the conference mark (and broke the school mark set by Nancy Rosenbaum '96) with 24 rebounds at McDaniel. She also broke a conference record by hitting double figures in scoring for 47 consecutive games, receiving five Player of the Week honors. Garnet senior captain Melissa Grigsby joined Stockbower on the All-Centennial team, earning honorable mention after handing out 3.7 assists per game (top-10 in the Conference) while making 88.4 percent of her free throws. Grigsby made a stirring exit on Senior Night at Tarble Pavilion, scoring a career-high 22 points in a win over Washington.

Indoor track-and-field (women 7th, men 9th at CC Championships) Senior Caitlin Mullarkey became the fourth female in Swarthmore history to earn All-America for indoor track-and-field, finishing fifth in the mile run at the NCAA Division III indoor championships in Terre Haute, Ind. Mullarkey qualified for the national meet by breaking the school record in the mile run at the E.C.A.C. Division III Championships on March 7, recording a time of 4:59.54—the eighth-best in all of Division III. Freshman hurdler Kenyetta Givans missed a gold medal in the 55-meter event at the Conference Championships by two one-hundreths of a second. Her time of 8.575 broke the school record of 8.71 set by Catherine Lane in 1997. The women's distance medley relay team of Nyika Corbett '10, Givans, Natalie Stone '09, and Mullarkey earned a bronze medal at the Conference Championships. Senior Dan Hodson joined Mullarkey in being named Conference Co-Indoor Track-and-Field Athlete of the Week on Jan. 13 after winning the mile at the Delaware Winter Invitational.

—Kyle Leach

JAKE MROZEWSKI '11, COURTESY OF *THE DAILY GAZETTE*

En Garde!

In February, Swarthmore hosted the Southern Atlantic Conference Fencing Championship at the Lamb Miller Field House. Teams from 13 institutions from New York to Florida participated. In the largest of four regional tournaments leading to the U.S. Association of Collegiate Fencing Clubs Championships, the Swarthmore female and male teams established themselves as a force to be reckoned with. Several competitors from both teams (including the Garnet's Andrew Zimmerman '11, *above right,* taking on an épee opponent from Virginia Tech) won individual medals, with the Swarthmore women garnering the gold medal and the men the silver, resulting in a second place finish overall. The 2009 SAC marked the first time that the Swarthmore squad had hosted a major collegiate fencing tournament. Plans are afoot to host the national tournament in 2010.

License to *Imagine*

THE TREE OF HISTORY IS NOURISHED BY DREAMS AND STORIES AS WELL AS BY FACTS.

By Timothy Burke, professor of history

GEORGE WIDMAN

Last year, the Philadelphia City Council passed a bill requiring the licensing of tour guides in the historic area of the city. The legislation created a requirement for guides to be periodically tested on their historical knowledge. Some of the debate around the legislation was predictably concerned with the size and prerogatives of government and the cost of additional bureaucracy. I found myself more concerned with the proposition that what we want from tour guides is a testable adherence to concrete historical facts. Perhaps perversely for a professional historian, I think that a few tall tales and imaginative shadings from the guides at Philadelphia's historic sites are not only inevitable but a potentially positive part of the ongoing creative renewal of historical knowledge.

To start with, I'm skeptical about what this test ought to test for. Think of a fact about Philadelphia in the colonial era. That Benjamin Franklin lived in a house now marked by a sculpture at Franklin Court? Certainly. That George Washington kept slaves at his presidential home when Philadelphia was the capital of the United States? Absolutely. That colonial Philadelphia was a part of a larger Atlantic political economy that was crucially shaped by slavery throughout the Americas? Very much a fact. That the lives of ordinary residents of late colonial Philadelphia was considerably different from the lives of Franklin and other members of the city's elite? Certainly as well.

I'm not suggesting that your average tour guide, clip-clopping around Independence Hall in a horse-drawn buggy, should offer a lecture on mid–18th-century social history.

It's just that if we want guides or other

people to know "facts," that, in and of itself, doesn't tell us much about which facts matter or which facts are appropriate to what context. There are a lot of facts, after all.

Periodically, civic and political groups issue the results of surveys that suggest the American public is ignorant about history. It's often implied that this is an accelerating trend, but this is very difficult to say, both because such tests haven't been standardized across a long time span and because those results that have been reported don't really typically demonstrate progressively greater ignorance in recent years. At the least, if a lack of knowledge about dates, facts, and events is a continuous condition in modern American life, it begs a question about whether there are any meaningful consequences to such ignorance. Perhaps Henry Ford was right, and in a country known for reinvention, history is bunk. More pointedly, perhaps the 19th-century French intellectual Ernst Renan was right when he observed that nations need history but that they generally need to get it wrong, so as to forget aspects of the past that would call into question the unity or coherence of the nation-state.

However, I think there's plenty of evidence that Americans do care about history, often passionately so, and that when historical concerns rise to the surface, they often demonstrate a deep and complex understanding of the American past that rests both on the formal knowledge of historians and on the memories of communities, families, and individuals. This can very much include the signature events and names of American history, as the commercial success of Ken Burns' series *The Civil War* or a number of recently published biographies of the Founding Fathers suggests.

Public history, as in museum exhibits, monuments, and memorials, can be a particularly intense focal point for this kind of engagement. We care a lot about how the Smithsonian exhibits the history of the atomic bomb or about how to mark the Vietnam War in Washington. We care about how—or whether—to make a gigantic statue of the Native American leader Crazy Horse and about which buildings and places deserve preservation because of their links to the past. And when people care, they care about getting it *right* in a more expansive and vital way than a simple inventory of the facts.

It's often true that such public representations of the past contain factual inaccuracies or that they mythologize and misremember aspects of history. But not all inaccuracies are created equal. Historian Richard Slotkin argues in his 2002 essay "Fiction for the Purposes of History" that part of the professional training of historians should be writing historical fiction because such work opens up other kinds of truth through other voices and modes of representation. When we build memorials, visit historical sites, visit museums, stage reenactments, or travel somewhere to see and experience the past, we're trying to do something similar to what the best historical fiction does—to bring history inside our hearts and lives, to think in a new way about its meanings.

I once had a conversation with another historian who pointed out that Cape Coast Castle in Ghana was relatively unimportant in the history of the Atlantic slave trade—that far greater numbers of slaves were transported from other sites in West and Equatorial Africa. He conceded that at many of these other sites, there is little physical evidence today of that history and that other sites would be relatively inaccessible to contemporary travelers. Thus, Cape Coast Castle has become an important stop for African American tourists on trips to West Africa, a solemn opportunity to think about the history of enslavement. Slaves *were* held in Cape Coast Castle: it was a part of that world. The feel and look of that building today is an important portal into that history, a chance to make visible a history that is otherwise so deeply embedded in the modern world. A narrow vision of historical fact shouldn't bar the way to that opportunity.

Slotkin argues that historical fiction lets us access the power of history that resides in its mythic or poetic resonances with the present. It lets us create new myths or challenge old ones. When we set out to understand what we are and what we might yet be, we draw on the stories, characters, and lessons that the past provides. When we decide what we honor or despise, fear or treasure, we often turn to history. I once went hiking with family along a hilly back road near Death Valley in California. We came upon a short, abandoned mineshaft that was somewhere between 60 and 100 years old, apparently dug with hand tools by no more than a few individuals. That mineshaft, hundreds of miles from any settlement or community, is likely the only trace of the men and labor and dreams spent in that lonely, desolate place. If I wanted to say anything vividly individual about that history—as opposed to something systematic and abstract—I would need an imagination that goes beyond the kind of facts that could compose a concrete test for tour guides.

However we call upon history, it still requires careful study, is still constrained by the factual substance of the past. History isn't just any damn thing we please. Some of what we imagine through history is wrong because it so grossly or wildly misrepresents the truth of the past. Expert knowledge about the past is still important; it provides substance that everyone can use to flesh out memory and imagination. There are things we don't know about the past and things we can't know, and everyone should recognize those boundaries.

Of course, a perfectly truthful representation of some aspects of human history can also be used in service to a repellant vision. For example, a racist could be rigorously factual in a description of past massacres of Native Americans and then argue that because this "solved" the problem of Native Americans, this is exactly what the government should continue to do now with nonwhites. What's wrong here is not the command of facts, it's the ethics of it. Some of the dreams and myths we make with history are inherently bad not because they misrepresent the past, but because they are morally odious.

If a guide to historic Philadelphia adamantly denied that there were any slaves in Washington's house or claimed that Franklin was having a love affair with Queen Ranavalona III of Madagascar (born after Franklin's death), that guide would be malicious in the first case and silly in the second. But a guide who offers more plausible if slightly embellished tales of Franklin's romantic escapades or other mythic shadings of the lives and times of 18th-century Philadelphians isn't doing anything that we should call to heel. The tree of history is nourished by dreams and stories as well as by facts. ❧

skyscrapers

Although he does not have any Jewish ancestry he is aware of, Zadara sees Jewish-Polish culture Preserving its intellectual traditions is among the tasks he sets himself as a theater director.

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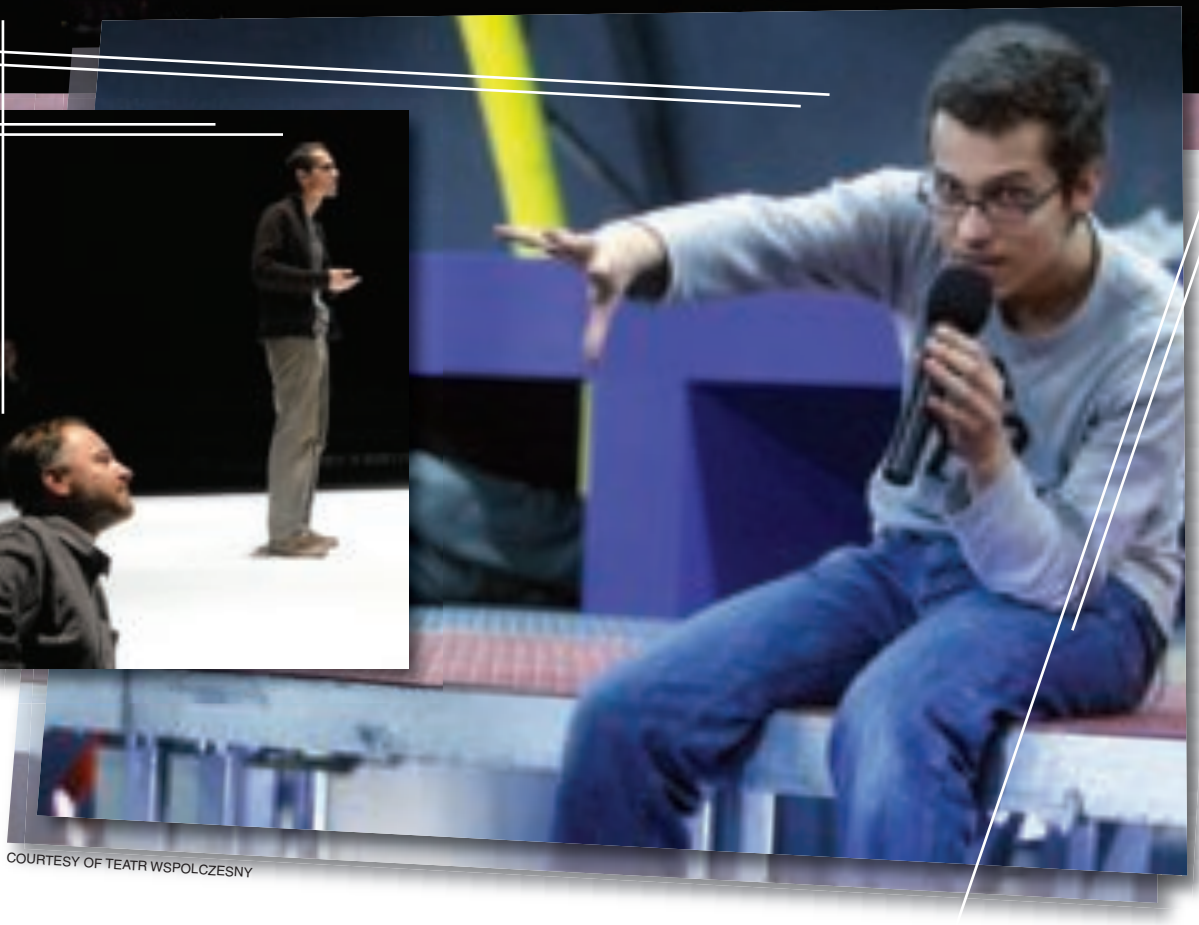
COURTESY OF STARY TEATR



COURTESY OF TEATR WSPOLCZESNY

Zadara *(far right)* in action as director of *The Index* by Tadeusz Rozewicz at the Wspolczesny Teatr in Wroclaw.

On one of his recent productions, *The Dismissal of the Greek Envoys (inset)*, by Jan Kochanowski, Zadara was assisted by Joseph Borkowski '08, a participant in Swarthmore's Department of Theater's Semester in Poland Program.

and emptiness

—which once stood on the brink of annihilation—as part of his heritage.

GETTY IMAGES

POLISH THEATER DIRECTOR MICHAL ZADARA '99 USES HIS ART TO PRESERVE THE INTELLECTUAL TRADITIONS OF POLISH-JEWISH CULTURE.

By Eli Epstein-Deutsch '10

"Skyscrapers and emptiness," says Polish theater director Michal Zadara '99, as he sits across the table from me, smoking a slim cigarette and gesturing pointedly at the Warsaw skyline outside the cafe window. I think I understand what he means. There is a disconcerting sense of unoccupied space at the heart of the city, amidst all the bombastic Stalinist architecture and modern glass hotels strewn awkwardly around the train station.

But when Zadara starts to speak about *Bat Yam-Tykocin,* his most recent play, it appears that he means the words in another sense as well.

"A huge void was left after the extermination of the immense Jewish community that was here before the Second World War," he says. "And Poland had the largest Jewish community in Europe before the creation of Israel—three million people, that was 10 percent of the population. A half-million lived in Warsaw alone."

The struggle of Poles grappling with the absence of their country's once deeply rooted Jewish civilization is the subject of *Bat Yam-Tykocin,* which is actually a pair of plays—one by Polish playwright Pawel Demirski and the other by Israeli playwright and director Yael Ronen—that were commissioned by the National Theater of Israel as part of the 2008 Year of Polish Culture in Israel. Although conceived and rehearsed separately, the plays offer complementary takes on the complex, ambivalent relationship between Poland and Israel in the last half century.

Ronen's play follows an Israeli family from Bat Yam visiting Eastern European concentration camps, Warsaw, and their father's Polish hometown of Tykocin, whose Jewish population was decimated during the Shoa; Demirski's work centers on a "nice old lady" in the same Polish town who is about to receive a Righteous Among the Nations award—Israel's honor for Gentiles across Europe who saved Jews during the Shoa without asking for recompense. Yet as the ceremony is being arranged, a crew of ambitious journalists from Warsaw, who, in Zadara's words, are "somewhat obsessed with Polish-Jewish history," discover that the woman could not possibly have done what she claimed, and they travel to the town to expose her as a fraud.

This scenario of deception and pettiness does not credit any of its characters with a great deal of nobility; through a darker subtext of pathology and greed, it captures some of the fixation among certain Poles with Jewish culture and its loss. And this is a phenomenon that can come as a shock to Israelis, who have not thought of Poland as a Jewish land for a long time. And perhaps it's why *Bat Yam-Tykocin* has such power in both Israel and Poland.

"Poland used to be a taboo topic for Jews in Israel," Zadara says. "The [Zionists] who left Europe before the war were building a new kind of Jew—a muscle Jew, as they called it. And after the war, Shoa survivors were—in a way—terribly ashamed of what the Shoa had done to them, so they distanced themselves from the Diaspora. Later, Shoa discourse was codified within certain boundaries, and sympathy for the old country certainly does not fall within those boundaries. In my opinion, the Shoa has taken the place of prewar Zionism as the foundational myth of Israel, and Poland exists within that myth purely as the site of Jewish extermination."

Zadara had just started work on Demirski's script when I spoke with him last summer, but he was already thinking broadly about the issues at stake in the production. For him, it's a chance to communicate to Israeli audiences the impulse that inspired scholars in Lublin to construct a scale model of the city in its former Jewish incarnation, that urge that leads non-Jewish musicians in Krakow to maintain an energetic Klezmer scene there. Clarinets howl though the lofts

of Kazimierz, the ancient Jewish quarter that remains intact despite the fact that most its residents were deported and killed.

In Zadara's eyes, the Poles' desire to preserve, to fill the void, is an urgent necessity. The surviving Jewish community, further depleted by emigration and old age, is simply no match for the sheer volume of remains it has inherited, the quantity of history to be catalogued, preserved, and restored. And naturally, not all Polish Jews—especially the younger generation—want or are able to spend their lives tending this massive landscape of cultural ruins.

"The only thing we can do," Zadara says, "is to say, okay, these are our ruins. They aren't somebody else's ruins. They shouldn't just be shipped off to Israel."

Although he does not have any Jewish ancestry (as far as he is aware of), Zadara sees Jewish-Polish culture—which once stood on the brink of annihilation—as part of his heritage. Preserving its intellectual traditions is among the tasks he sets himself as a theater director, and he has many peers in architecture, literature, and film who feel the same way.

There are "right-wing, nationalist elements" for whom Polish culture means Catholicism and ethnic homogeneity, he concedes. But Zadara takes a longer view. His sense of national identity harkens back to the time of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the Polish-Lithuanian Union, when Poland was "the most tolerant and ethnically diverse state in Europe."

ZADARA WAS AWARDED THE 2008 PASSPORT AWARD IN THEATER BY THE WEEKLY MAGAZINE *POLITYKA*, ROUGHLY POLAND'S EQUIVALENT OF A PULITZER PRIZE. IN APRIL OF THE SAME YEAR, HE WAS THE FEATURED ARTIST OF THE BIANNUAL WARSAW THEATER MEETINGS FESTIVAL, A SHOWCASE OF THE BEST PRODUCTIONS OF THE YEAR IN POLAND. THE FESTIVAL PROGRAM INCLUDED SEVEN PRODUCTIONS DIRECTED BY ZADARA FROM ALL OVER THE COUNTRY, INCLUDING WARSAW'S NATIONAL THEATER. IN JANUARY 2010, ZADARA IS SCHEDULED TO MAKE HIS OPERATIC DEBUT AT WARSAW'S NATIONAL OPERA, DIRECTING GREEK COMPOSER IANNIS XENAKIS'S RARELY STAGED *ORESTEIA*.

Since his graduation from the State Academy of Theater in Krakow, Zadara 's star has risen rapidly. With their visually compelling, anti-naturalistic atmosphere, his recent productions, including *Ifigenia* and *The Dismissal of the Greek Envoys (below)* have earned him comparisons to Krystian Lupa, Poland's most renowned contemporary director.

Right: Zadara with Tadeusz Rosewicz, the most important Polish living playwright and author of *The Index.*

COURTESY OF TEATR WSPOLCZESNY, WROCLAW

COURTESY OF STARY TEATR

ZADARA'S THINKING ABOUT HIS HOMELAND developed critically while he was at Swarthmore, where he began his theater education under Professor Allen Kuharski. An ocean's distance provided him with new perspectives. A moment early in his undergraduate career proved particularly influential. He and a newly minted group of friends were sitting in his off-campus apartment discussing literature, or China. Suddenly, it dawned on them that—although they came from different religious backgrounds and from cities as far apart as Sacramento and Jerusalem—they all shared Eastern-European descent.

This was an uncanny revelation for Zadara: "This thing you have is somehow larger than you, and it controls you. Even after the Holocaust, even after the emigration to America, there is something about Eastern Europe that stays with you no matter what history has done to you."

Around the same time, former Professor of Religion Nathaniel Deutsch introduced him to the fiction of Bruno Schulz, an early 20th-century fabulist of Galician small-town life who has been compared to Marc Chagall and Franz Kafka. "Schulz was clearly a brilliant Polish writer; he wrote some of the most beautiful works written in the Polish language. But he's also clearly a Jewish writer," says Zadara. "When you look at Poland from however many miles away, you see Poland as a whole. You don't see a difference between who was Jewish or who was not Jewish. That didn't make any sense to me."

Zadara's interest in multi-ethnic Polish history—and Judaism in particular—would have a decisive effect on his directing career.

After completing a double major in theater and political science, Zadara did a brief stint at a New York soft-

ware company while collaborating with an indie drama company before heading back to Europe, where he believed the state-subsidized and well-attended theater scene to be more fecund. He applied to a highly competitive directing program at the State Academy of Theater in Krakow and, to his shock, didn't even get an invitation for an interview. He was sure that his application, an annotated play-script, demonstrated his complete technical proficiency in all aspects of directing. He couldn't imagine what had happened.

Having pursued his education abroad, Zadara had failed to anticipate the divide between theatrical cultures in the United States and his home country. The technocratic American theater, he says, views ensembles as well-oiled machines run by skilled specialists; whereas in Poland, technique is a secondary issue, while performance is most important. In a Polish production, the members of the company sit around for weeks in rehearsal and talk about how the material resonates with them, he says with a touch of irony. The dean of the Academy had told Zadara that his fellow deans wouldn't even consider him for the program, because he hadn't given them any insight into his emotional being.

Zadara spent the next year living in Warsaw, assisting the director Krzysztof Warlikowski. During that time, he read a great deal about the events in the city during World War II, in particular the uprising in the Jewish ghetto. Right there in the city center, where Zadara and I are sitting, the Germans had liquidated the underground bunkers with Jewish resistance fighters inside them. The incomplete crop of postwar buildings we were looking at had been built right on top of the corpses.

Zadara says that this fact developed into an "unhealthy obsession" for him: "I stopped being able to communicate with normal people. People would say, 'What's up?' and I would say, 'Actually, I just read today that on this corner there was this massacre and on this corner, this burned and that burned.'"

The next year he applied again to the Academy. This time, he chose *The Visit* by Friedrich Dürrenmatt for a script—a play about past crimes that come back to haunt a well-to-do young man. In his notes, Zadara connected the material to his own ghostly reckonings and to recent revelations of Polish pogroms in the 1940s. This time, he got into the program, one of four admitted from among 600 applicants.

Since his graduation from the State Academy, Zadara's star has risen rapidly. With their visually compelling, anti-naturalistic atmosphere, his recent productions, including *Ifigenia* and *The Dismissal of the Greek Envoys,* have earned him comparisons to Krystian Lupa, Poland's most renowned contemporary director. Although he resists this connection, he says that he and Lupa share a "rejection of all style and technique" and an embrace of theater based on issues."

His dramatic credo is neo-Brechtian; he believes in taking the process of alienation to the extreme. "At every moment, [the audience] should have to ask themselves, 'What am I watching?' and never have the possibility of emotionally immersing themselves in the experience. The self-awareness generated by this continual estrangement—Brecht's *Verfremdungseffekt*—allows the viewer to produce his or her own thoughts and reactions to the issues, rather than being fed ideas and images from the stage.

Asked about how he reconciles his anti-stylistic philosophy with the perceived aestheticism of his work, Zadara refers to a lecture by philosopher Karl Popper, who said that the making of a new scientific discovery always has the quality of a strange beauty.

For Zadara, good theater is always a new discovery.

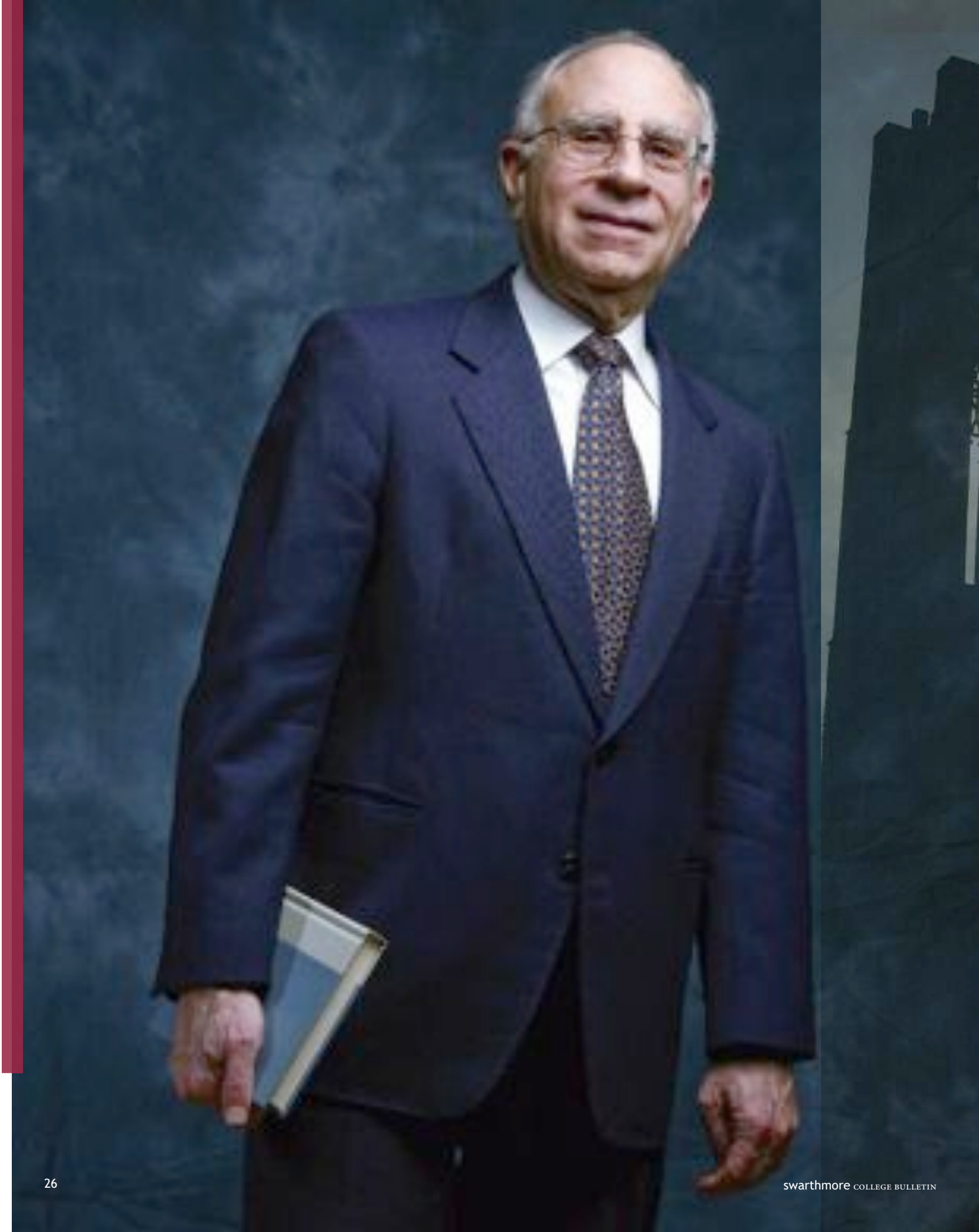
Eli Epstein-Deutsch is pursuing a self-designed major in modernistic studies and is a cofounder of the student magazine The Night Cafe.

DESIGN: STUDIO TEMEPROWKA; PERMISSION OF INSTYTUT TEATRALNY, WARSAW


BARTLOMIEJ SOWA/COURTESY OF TEATR WSPOLCZESNY, WROCLAW

In fall 2008, the world premiere of *Bat Yam-Tykocin (above)* took place, co-produced by the Polish Wroclawski Teatr Wspolczesny and the Habimah National Theatre of Israel. Michal Zadara directed Polish playwright Pavel Demirski's *Tykocin; Bat-Yam* was written and directed by Israeli playwright/director Yael Ronen. The plays, which may stand alone or be shown together, were commissioned by the National Theatre of Israel as part of the 2008 Year of Polish Culture in Israel. During production of *Bat Yam-Tykocin,* Louis Jargow '10, an honors theater major, worked as Zadara's sound designer and assistant director. Jargow is currently writing a thesis on Zadara's work based on his semester of collaboration with and observation of Zadara's work in Poland and Israel.

Top: A poster created for the 2008 Warsaw Meetings Festival, for which Michal Zadara was the featured director.



A transformative PRESIDENCY

Alfred H. Bloom's vision for Swarthmore is anchored in the College's core values—rigorous academics and social responsibility. His success in articulating and advancing those values has been unprecedented in the College's history.

By Lawrence Schall '75

The most transformative presidencies in higher education have belonged to those whose tenure lasts far beyond the current eight-and-a-half–year average for college and university chief executives. Think of presidents such as Charles Eliot, who led Harvard from 1869 to 1909, building it into a modern university. Or Robert Maynard Hutchins, who served as president and chancellor of the University of Chicago from 1929 until 1951, introducing controversial reforms while making Chicago a great center of liberal learning.

Upon his departure from Swarthmore this summer, President Alfred H. Bloom will have served the College just one year less than any president in its history. (Frank Aydelotte and Joseph Swain each served 19 years.) Future historians of Swarthmore College will surely see his 18-year tenure as a time of institu-

ELEFTHERIOS KOSTANS/IAN BRADSHAW (CLOTHIER)

Early in his presidency, Bloom outlined the qualities that he believed made the College unique: "maintaining the highest academic standard and sustaining a faculty that combines dedication to teaching with dedication to intellectual and artistic advance" and "building a connection between intellectual skills and the responsibility to use them to shape a more just and humane world."

IAN BRADSHAW

tional transformation—when the College's core values were challenged and recalibrated. Given the length of his association with the College—which included 12 years on the faculty and a stint as associate provost before moving to Pitzer College in 1986 as vice president for academic affairs—it's not surprising that a multitude of changes have occurred. The more interesting question is: What is it about Al Bloom and his presidency that allowed it to thrive for almost two decades?

To understand some of the reasons for his success, one needs to look back much farther than 1991, when Bloom returned from Pitzer to assume Swarthmore's presidency.

It helps to understand that Swarthmore College grew out of an American civil war of sorts. Not the War Between the States but rather an ideological and cultural divide among the Quakers. The Great Separation of 1827, in the most simple terms, was a controversy between liberal and conservative Quakers—although the reality was far more complex.

The conservative Orthodox branch of the Society of Friends consisted of founders of Swarthmore's neighbor to the west, Haverford College. They represented the urban Quakers, the elders, the more educated and wealthy, and those wishing to impose a doctrinal authority. The liberal branch, the Hicksites, was responsible for founding Swarthmore. They were, as a group, anti-authoritarian—an irregular collection of younger, less urbane Quakers.

This legacy should come as no surprise to most Swarthmoreans; we remain an irregular bunch that loves to debate and challenge authority every chance we get. It also should come as no surprise, then, that since its origins, Swarthmore's history has been full of debate, challenge, and spirited disagreement.

Swarthmore's first president, Edward Parrish, was removed from office in 1871 as a result of a Board split over the issue of how progressive the College ought to be. It is remarkable how many of Swarthmore's subsequent presidents have wrestled with similar issues. Frank Aydelotte, who, it's often said, was the College's pivotal president, was aggressively attacked by many alumni throughout his 19-year presidency, yet he prevailed to manifest his vision in a multitude of ways.

In his 2008 Commencement address, President Bloom points to two core traditions of the College that echo Aydelotte's vision and are fundamentally responsible for Swarthmore's unmatched educational legacy: the Honors Program and the Quaker tradition.

The importance of our Quaker tradition is obvious. Writing in 1986, James Michener '29 speculated on how Swarthmore had escaped weaknesses that troubled many other schools: "I suspect the reason lies in the nature of Quakerism. It is not dictatorial. It is not frightened of change. It encourages individual choice. And it has a sturdy appreciation of the society in which it functions."

But Al Bloom's inclusion of the Honors Program on his short list of Swarthmore's core traditions may be more unexpected. Although those who have remained very close to the College during his tenure will understand the central position honors held in his agenda, Al Bloom is likely to be remembered more for promoting diversity, multiculturalism, ethical intelligence, and social responsibility—and, by some, for ending 122 years of football—than as the president who saved and revived the intellectual principles and academic experience of honors. Yet focusing on Swarthmore's Quaker values and the Honors Program is fundamental in understanding the vigor of the Bloom presidency.

Seventy-five years ago, when President Aydelotte introduced the idea of honors to members of the faculty in private conversations in their homes along Whittier Place, he believed that this program alone might transform the

nature of intellectual life at the College.

Aydelotte's ideal of honors was based upon the wisdom of allowing individuals freedom of choice—specifically, the choice to excel. He had a clear and accurate view of society outside the College walls; he understood there was a need—and tremendous demand—for the vision he brought.

As a member of the first Rhodes Scholar class, Aydelotte came to Swarthmore with the mission of creating an Oxford-style Honors Program in America. He chose Swarthmore in large part because of its Quaker heritage, believing that it would be an amenable and welcoming place to implement his ideas. Aydelotte and the faculty became true partners in this mission. He not only embraced the *idea* of change, he was an *agent* of change for Swarthmore.

Along with the Honors Program came the outlawing of hazing, the abolition of sororities, and the removal of big-time football schools such as the University of Pennsylvania and Princeton from Swarthmore's schedule. Complaints flowed from alumni about "new" admissions policies that refused to take into account the "broader qualities of manhood." The chair of the Board of Managers, Charles Jenkins, reported he had received a complaint that half of the boys in the freshman class wore glasses!

In 1928, Aydelotte wrote to Jenkins that the real issue was whether the Board would allow him to pursue his vision for the College. He recognized that Swarthmore might choose a more conventional type of education in which intellectual values were not as strongly emphasized. If that was the decision of the Board, Aydelotte offered his resignation. He left for Egypt for several months while a small group of Managers deliberated his fate.

Among other issues, there was the question of whether the College would continue a tradition of powerhouse football that had reigned since the late 19th century—or would it fully embrace the Honors Program that Aydelotte had introduced? Ultimately, the Board voted to support Aydelotte, and he remained president for another 12 years with a faculty and student body that had been transformed. Swarthmore did indeed turn out to be a good place to test his ideals, although a welcoming environment clearly took a bit longer to establish.

Al Bloom, like Aydelotte, came to the College with a mission. By 1996, he had transformed the student body so that it represented the full range of diversity in America and across the world. Like Aydelotte, he faced concerns from those who were convinced that the ways of the past were working just fine.

Reflecting upon Michener's statement, it is hard not to notice that the characteristics he cites as central to the ideals of Quakerism also define Al Bloom's approach to change—and point to the reasons he has been so able to bring it about. He is never dictatorial, promotes individual choice, and has an almost unmatched understanding of the world in which Swarthmore exists. As noted by former Provost Jennie Keith, Al always models the behaviors he encourages in others, engagement at the highest intellectual level with the ethical dimension constantly in mind: "Right down to decisions about paper versus Styrofoam cups in the snack bar, he presents these issues to students as intellectual problems and encourages them to reach their ethical positions after applying their brain power to thorough research and analysis." (It turns out that Styrofoam is better for the environment.)

ELEFTHERIOS KOSTANS

Bloom, like Frank Aydelotte, came to the College with a mission. And like Aydelotte, he faced concerns from those who were convinced that the ways of the past were working just fine.

The job of president is an almost impossible one; there is far too little time to do everything you want to do, and there are far too many constituents to keep happy. In fact, the longer one holds such a job, the more time one has to make enemies. The only way to cope is to love what you do, day after day, year after year. Amazingly, even after 18 years, Al Bloom clearly still loves what he does. One manager jokes that Al has even persuaded the faculty that a president can serve a useful purpose.

The Blooms' passionate engagement is most exuberantly displayed around the dinner table. Craig

BOB KRIST

Williamson, the Swarthmore chair and professor of English Literature, uses the Yiddish word *haimisch* to describe the experience of breaking bread with the Blooms—informal, familiar, and having the characteristics of a happy home. Having sat in a university president's chair for almost four years, I can't begin to tell you how important it is to display conviviality and joy in one's position.

Rachel Merz, the Walter Kemp Professor of Natural Sciences, shared with me her personal experience with President Bloom during his first year: "He has this unstoppable enthusiasm, pride, and optimism about Swarthmore that I honestly thought was a masterful show—how could anyone be that enthusiastic about anything? But, in these 18 years, I have never seen any sign that he didn't completely believe what he was saying. Moreover, he manages to be convincing in a way that helped me (and others) feel pride and ownership in this grand venture."

Although Al and I often agreed about fundamental decisions facing the College, we did not see eye-to-eye on every issue. I recall in particular one conversation early in my work at the College. "Larry," Al said in his quiet and understated way, "It would be great if you could find ways to say 'yes' a whole lot more than you say 'no.'" I keep that lesson in mind—although I suspect I continue to say 'no' far more than he had in mind.

Board Chair Barbara Mather '65 writes as way of explanation: "It is constantly amazing the way Al insists on emphasizing the positive. He just cannot bear to be anything other than relentlessly positive." To my mind, that's a gift.

Of course, the timing of Bloom's presidency has not hurt his ability to answer affirmatively. Saying yes to plenty of great ideas has been possible at Swarthmore for the last 18 years in part because of the economic prosperity of the time. Yet, there is also no question that Al's ability to keep Swarthmore prosperous through year after year of record admissions and infrastructure improvement can be attributed to his equally remarkable gift for fundraising. In fact, it is almost impossible to imagine the last two decades at Swarthmore without the Blooms. Their influence has been that profound.

In 2002, while writing my doctoral dissertation, I interviewed several managers who had served on the committee that brought Al Bloom back to Swarthmore from the job of vice president at Pitzer College, where he had served for five years.

I asked them whether they understood what they were getting when they chose Al. For example, had diversity and multiculturalism come up in his interviews? Did they appreciate the fact that he would arrive at Swarthmore with an agenda for real change? To a person, none had truly anticipated what Al Bloom had in mind for Swarthmore. Of course, they recalled that every candidate talked about the importance of diversity in higher education, among students and faculty alike. But did

In 2002, I asked members of the search committee whether they understood what they were getting when they chose Al 13 years before. Had diversity and multiculturalism come up in his interviews? Did they appreciate the fact that he would arrive at Swarthmore with an agenda for real change? None had truly anticipated what Al Bloom had in mind for Swarthmore.

these managers actually believe that Al Bloom meant what he said when he talked about changing the face of Swarthmore? Did they imagine a Chinese dragon prancing across the stage at his inauguration? Did they see what was coming? No, no, and no.

Al reflected on his first few years as president during my hours-long interview with him seven years ago. Of course, he meant what he said during his interviews; he arrived in the summer of 1991 deeply committed to an agenda of change. And, like Aydelotte, he "chose" Swarthmore because he knew it had the Quaker capacity for institutional self-reflection and change.

Al had a vision for the College that was different than the Swarthmore of my generation and eras before. Central to that vision was altering the makeup of the student population. Since the late 1960s, the College had been committed to diversifying its student body and its faculty but had achieved only modest success in meeting those goals. After a few years in office, seeing the status quo continue despite his exhortations, Al decided to change most of our traditional practices in the Admissions Office. In fall 1996, after he brought in a new dean of admissions who changed the face of the admissions staff, the number of African-American and Latino students in the entering Class of 2000 jumped from 26 to 94—an astonishing 400 percent increase.

This revolutionary shift in admissions was wrenching and difficult. Internally, it required a change in leadership and the loss of a beloved employee. In the community, the Class of 2000 drew a huge amount of attention, some of it frankly negative. Even before these students arrived, members of the faculty branded the class a problem. As it turned out, however, the class did quite well at Swarthmore, graduating more than 92 percent of matriculants within five years—slightly greater than the average graduation rate for the previous 10 classes, which was 90.9 percent.

But this was just the beginning of a new student demographic for Swarthmore; today, the proportion of students of color in an average entering class has grown from around 15 percent to nearly 40 percent. At times, Al Bloom has been criticized for not confronting hard issues, but in this instance one can see his true mettle. Like Aydelotte, he is one of the most persistent people I know, with a stubborn streak that comes from a deep commitment to his ideals. When he feels passionately about something, one should never bet against him. In pushing for a community characterized by inclusion, Al not only led a controversial change in admissions policy, but his presidency survived it.

It's impossible to mention Al's long tenure at Swarthmore without raising the issue of football. In some ways it is unimaginable that Al Bloom's presidency might be defined, even in part, by athletics. By his own admission, Al's love of sport came to him late in life. Yet, the decision to end more than a century of football at the College was historic and, in my opinion, would have felled most presidents.

Why, then, did it not take Al down? In my view, the answer lies in his staking out a position based on clearly-defined and articulated principles. Were these issues about which people could differ? Absolutely. But, even when opponents of the decision got caustic and personal, Al Bloom stuck with his ideas and ideals. He believed very strongly that, at a college the size of Swarthmore, it was not appropriate to recruit and maintain a team of 60 to 80 male students to play football. I don't say this to stir up old emotions. I was an athlete at the College, and most of my friends were athletes—many of them on the football team. There wasn't one of them who didn't "belong" at Swarthmore. There are, however, thousands of students each year who *could* fit in at the College, yet each class has just 375 places—and just 180 men. The question became not whether an individual applicant might belong, but how should Swarthmore best select the small group that would matriculate?

The group that was most vocal—and sought to bring an end to Bloom's presidency over this issue—argued that the decision to end football indicated that Swarthmore had arrived at a new mission and vision for the College community.

"A real college has a football team," one partisan wrote. I would argue that it was precisely this image (which President Courtney Smith once referred to as a movie image of collegiate life) that President Bloom was fighting. The Swarthmore that presidents Aydelotte, Smith, and Bloom wanted to mold was as far from this image as imaginable.

In some ways, the opponents of the football decision were exactly right. The Swarthmore of 2000 was a different place from the one it had been 10 years before—and certainly 50 or 100 years before. Al Bloom was intent on making it different, and for this he paid a tremendous personal toll. Larry Shane, chair of the Board of Managers, who stood beside Al through the entire episode, has shared that he was personally devastated by the attacks by alumni and was always amazed that Al remained eager and open to reconciliation throughout the controversy.

Yet, as time has passed, despite the degree of turmoil it created, the wisdom of the decision is clear. This was a defining moment for the College—a moment when the president took an unpopular stance while making clear the primacy of Swarthmore's intellectual mission. Some continue to take issue with this emphasis, but I believe what makes Swarthmore so distinctive is its being unafraid to own this brand in American higher education—and indeed to revel in it. And for nearly 18 years, Al Bloom has been the team captain for the ideal of intellectual mission.

ELEFTHERIOS KOSTANS

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(At the same time, however, the wisdom of ending football has born fruit in the steady revitalization of the athletics program. For example, last fall, the men's soccer team reached the third round of the NCAA Division III championships for the first time since 1974—a team that I played on.)

Al has also shown himself to be a superb administrator. When he met resistance to his multicultural agenda, he instead moved to reconceive and restore Aydelotte's Honors Program, which was in danger of fading away as the centerpiece of a Swarthmore education.

By the early 1990s, the Honors Program was attracting just a small fraction of the student body. Al did not want this signature program to wither away, and he worked with Jennie Keith and a faculty committee chaired by Craig Williamson to revive honors. While preserving the essential elements of the program—acceptance into honors by the faculty, independent study in both a major and minor subject during the junior and senior year, and rigorous written and oral examination by leading outside scholars in the field—the faculty recognized that their best students needed more flexibility and choice within honors. Some students desired to spend all or part of their junior year abroad. Other students wanted to be able to prepare for honors with performances, exhibits, and field work instead of the traditional theses and papers. Al worked quietly behind the scenes to help shape a proposal for "new honors" that would pass muster with the faculty. Implemented in 1997, today's Honors Program includes all departments and disciplines at the College and once again attracts more than a third of the student body.

With this success behind him, Al was able to return to more difficult parts of his agenda and find increasing success there. The entrance of the Class of 2000 was the signal moment for changing the complexion of the student body, but Al also kept on with the slower, more challenging task of diversifying the faculty and staff. In anticipation of a significant number of faculty retirements in the decade ahead, he and Keith worked with departments to open up some of those tenured positions sooner, then encouraged the hiring of women and minorities who were just starting their academic careers. The Mellon-Mays fellowship program and other new foundation-funded positions also helped diversify the faculty—and the curriculum. Al was behind the introduction of Chinese and Japanese language study, and later—well before it became essential—Arabic.

Soon after Al became president, he outlined for the Board the qualities that he believed made the College unique. He began with "maintaining the highest academic standard and sustaining a faculty that combines dedica-

tion to teaching with dedication to intellectual and artistic advance." Also on his short list was "building a connection between intellectual skills and the responsibility to use them to shape a more just and humane world." If one tried to summarize Al Bloom's vision in just a few words, you would be hard-pressed to do better than he did at the start of his presidency. And therein lies the answer to the question: How did Al Bloom manage to survive—and thrive—for 18 years? He came to Swarthmore with a clear vision and never wavered. He not only articulated more clearly than anyone had before a vision of what Swarthmore could be, but he lived it in every relationship with faculty, students, staff, alumni, and friends.

This consistent vision was again articulated in his 2008 Commencement address:

> Swarthmore graduates persist in imagining a world that will offer security, nutrition, health care, education, respect, personal freedoms, political participation, and opportunity to everyone. They persist in applying their exacting and creative habits of mind not only to their professional success, but also to better understand how that more ideal world can be built. They persist in judging leadership, policy, and action in light of the most comprehensive understanding they can assemble and in terms of how that leadership, policy, and action will not only affect their own communities and nations, but impede or hasten the realization of that better world. And across whatever careers they pursue, Swarthmore graduates persist in striving to align the manner and purposes of their own lives with contributing to the knowledge, the beauty, the health, the productivity, the justice, the inclusion, the environmental responsibility, and the resolution of conflict that will create that more humane world.

This is Al's vision for the college—and it has been since day one. At times, he had to slow down and let others catch up. At certain moments, he had to steel himself for the criticism and just take it. Al is an optimist to his core, and he always believed that a well-reasoned argument would, in the end, win out. He is a wonderful friend to many, and those friends—on the faculty and on the board—often came forward and stood at his side when times were tough. Finally, it matters that Al's vision was the right one for Swarthmore in 1990 and, I believe, remains the right one today. Al Bloom has been an extraordinary leader of an extraordinary institution. Both he and we have been very fortunate indeed.

Lawrence Schall has been president of Oglethorpe University in Atlanta since 2005. He graduated from Swarthmore with honors, majoring in history. After earning a J.D. degree from the University of Pennsylvania Law School in 1978, Schall practiced as a trial attorney, specializing in civil rights litigation with a focus on children's rights and public assistance issues. In 1990, he returned to Swarthmore and served in management for 15 years, leaving as vice president for administration. He was awarded a Ph.D. in higher education administration from the University of Pennsylvania in 2003.

PHILLIP STERN '84

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Word Domination

DOROTHEA LISA GILLIM '86 INSPIRES ELOQUENCE AND LAUGHTER WITH WORDGIRL.

By Katie Becker '10

Becky Botsford seems to live the average life of a 10-year-old girl. She has moderately clueless parents, an annoying younger brother, a pet monkey, and a secret. When trouble arises, Becky becomes WordGirl, a superhero with super strength, super speed, and a super vocabulary. Whether she's out saving the city from a rat-brained villain's nefarious plot to steal the cheese supply or at home helping her father complete a crossword puzzle, Becky is the star of *WordGirl,* an educational children's show on PBS, and the brainchild of Dorothea Lisa Gillim '86.

As a student at Swarthmore, Gillim didn't expect to be creating and producing cartoons for a living, but now she is trying to develop "work that redeems the medium." And people are taking notice. Only in its second season, *WordGirl* has won an Emmy award for Outstanding Writing in Animation, a Television Critics Association award for Outstanding Achievement in Children's Programming, and a Parents Choice award. This fall, Scholastic, owner of Soup2Nuts, the production company where Gillim works, released a series of *WordGirl* books—and *WordGirl* merchandise debuts this spring. Gillim has high hopes for future seasons, including a movie in season three. Despite her success, her path to television, cartoons, and *WordGirl* has been anything but straight.

Growing up in Rochester, N.Y., Gillim's family placed a high value on reading. "[My father] would recite poetry at the dinner table," she recalls, "which now seems completely absurd to me but at the time seemed normal." Gillim's favorite child-

"I felt like such a loser in my Swarthmore days," Gillim says. "It was a real struggle for me personally that I wasn't as successful as my peers were. I'm all about the late bloomers."

hood cartoons were shows such as *The Rocky and Bullwinkle Show, The Electric Company*, and *Looney Tunes,* which she now credits for her own desire to create programming that is "first and foremost" funny but also includes educational content. She developed a love of words in this environment, and, in ninth grade, Gillim even asked her parents for a dictionary for Christmas.

Gillim's love of words did not translate easily into a clear career choice once she started college. "Before I entered Swarthmore," Gillim says, "I wanted to be—in no particular order—a genetic scientist, a news anchor, a violinist, and a linguist." Being in school did not help her make a decision about her future, and the lack of a career path became a source of great discomfort for Gillim. An Honors Program dropout, she transferred to UC–Berkeley in the fall semester of her junior year but returned to Swarthmore when she realized she wasn't learning there. She recalls that she had "a really tough time" at Swarthmore because of the pressure she felt to go into academia.

Gillim faced similar confusion about her plans after graduation. She was hired as a fifth-grade teacher in Philadelphia but, after three years, was unsatisfied with the impact she was having and unsure of where to go from there. "So I did what any self-respecting Swarthmore graduate would do—I went to graduate school," she says.

Gillim earned a master's degree from Harvard in what she calls "a very expensive career-exploration program." Still, she didn't think of television as a career path and spent the next three years as a freelance writer in the field of educational media.

With rent due and a desire to expand her culinary options beyond macaroni and cheese, Gillim called Tom Snyder '72 to ask for a job. He is the founder of Tom Snyder Productions, an educational software company whose programs Gillim had used when she taught fifth grade. "I remember reading the [software] box and Tom's bio and thinking we have all this in common because we both went to Swarthmore and the little private schools where we taught were like sister schools. I called him up, and it just so happened that the project manager was going on maternity leave, so he hired me practically on the spot," Gillim says.

Gillim disliked developing software and "was really bad at it," but she learned to edit audio around the time when the animation division of the company, which would become Soup2Nuts, was producing the popular Comedy Central series *Dr. Katz: Professional Therapist.* Once she became involved with that show, her career "basically paralleled the growth of the company," she says.

Gillim has been with Soup2Nuts for 14 years. After working on *Dr. Katz,* she produced the company's second show, *Science Court,* and created and produced a show called *Hey Monie!* "I'm all about the late bloomers," Gillim says of the time it took her to find the best fit in a career. Challenged in recent years to do a show about literacy, Gillim returned to her love of words for inspiration. "I thought, wouldn't it be cool if eloquence were a super power just like super speed or super strength? Because to me, eloquence is kind of a super power," she says.

With the premise of an eloquent super hero, Gillim also wanted "to create a character that had never been on television before." She created a superhero named WordGirl, a.k.a. Becky Botsford, to counteract the relative lack of female superheroes in the media, and their "sexed-up" image when they do appear—and because of her desire to create a character that would be "empowering for girls." Gillim also wanted WordGirl to be a character to whom all kids could relate, so, "We made her what I call ethnically ambiguous, she looks like she could belong to many cultures, even though she's from the planet Lexicon."

"Wouldn't it be cool if eloquence were a super power just like super speed or super strength? Because to me, eloquence is kind of a super power."

The show centers on the adventures of WordGirl and her monkey sidekick, Captain Huggy Face, as they combat the various villains in their town and hide WordGirl's secret identity. WordGirl first appeared on PBS in November 2006 as a series of two-minute shorts; the series premiered as a 30-minute program in fall 2007. Each episode highlights two words, which are cued by a friendly voice at the beginning telling viewers to listen for words such as "stampede" and "accelerate." The writers and voice actors on the show are "A-caliber comedy," according to Gillim, including Jeffrey Tambor of *Arrested Development,* Chris Parnell of *Saturday Night Live,* and Tom Kenny, the voice of SpongeBob SquarePants.

People of all ages find *WordGirl* funny, and that's exactly what Gillim intended.

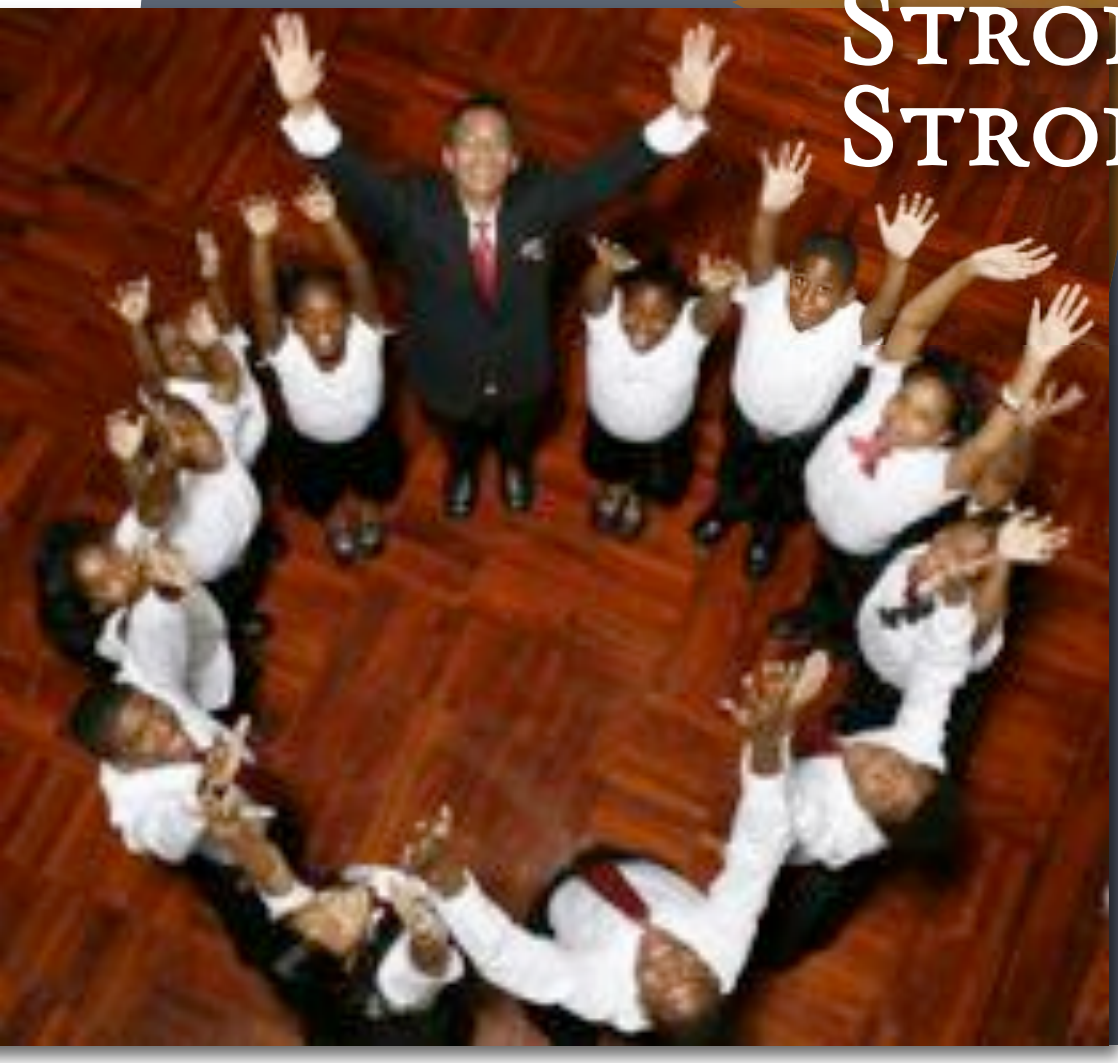
"I wanted to do the *SpongeBob SquarePants* of PBS, I wanted to do a show that would appeal to 3-year-olds and 83-year-olds. And it's happening," Gillim says. She has been receiving letters from people of all ages who are enjoying the show. One 15-year-old girl wrote Gillim to thank her "for creating a kid's show that she doesn't hate to watch with her younger sister." She hopes that college students will discover the show as well. "When I was in college, we used to watch *Pee-Wee's Playhouse* on Saturday morning, and we would call it the hangover hour," Gillim says.

The success of the show can be attributed to Gillim's funny-comes-first approach. "I didn't want the learning to be heavy-handed," Gillim says. "I have a motto: Vocabulary is not a plot point." The creation of each episode reflects this motto, because the words come "almost last," according to Gillim, when the writers put together an outline for the show. They focus first on thinking of a situation that will be really funny, then they start to think about the words that would be well suited to repeated use in the storyline, "ideally in a really funny way," she says. Gillim hopes that the show will inspire kids to learn more about language while helping them to "feel cool learning new words and feel smart for using them," she says.

Finding her path may have taken a while, but now that she has, Gillim views work as a "joy." When asked about where she sees WordGirl going in the future, Gillim replies with a deadpan, "World domination, really." With the bevy of WordGirl products on the way, world domination may not be far off. Most importantly, Gillim looks forward to many more seasons because "We have a lot more stories to tell."

Editor's note: Since this article was written, Dorothea Gillim has moved to Boston to join the WBGH children's programming team as an executive producer.

Strong Voices Strong Minds Strong Spirits



LEFT: GEORGE WIDMAN/*ABOVE AND RIGHT*: ELEFTHERIOS KOSTANS

"When I first came to Swarthmore, I thought I was just passing through," says John Alston, in a reflective mood as he looks back on 15 years as founding director of the Chester Children's Chorus (CCC) and 18 as a member of the College's Music and Dance Department. "I thought I would be here for a year or two and, then, I'd go on to become a famous choral director," he says, adding wryly, "though there is no such thing."

Alston *has* found fame among the children of Chester, the most impoverished city in Pennsylvania. He's become a pied piper of music, education, and opportunity to 100 boys and girls who currently comprise the CCC—and now to nearly 200 more children in grades pre-K through second at the Chester Upland School of the Arts, which opened in September 2008. (Look for an article about the first year of this exciting new school in a future *Bulletin*.)

The CCC's Summer Learning Program includes science taught by Swarthmore faculty members, African dance and drumming, a reading program, and more.

The CCC began in 1994 as the Chester Boys' Choir, with seven boys. Having sung in the Newark (N.J.) Boys Chorus as a youth, Alston wanted to create a similar experience for boys in Chester, so he went to the Columbus Elementary School looking for boys who liked to sing. On Saturday mornings, he drove a borrowed College van to Chester to pick them up at their homes and bring them to campus.

The chorus expanded slowly at first, with a few new boys joining each year after auditions of second graders from Chester elementary schools. A summer day camp on campus was added, giving Alston and the boys more time together and opening up more learning opportunities, such as a reading program staffed by volunteers who worked one-on-one with the children. Alston taught them chess and karate, then took them outside for roughhouse games of kickball in the Scott Amphitheater or pick-up

At 15, the Chester Children's Chorus is much more than a singing group.

By Jeffrey Lott

Director John Alston, associate professor of music at the College (*above*), created a community of strivers and seekers in the Chester Children's Chorus, which he founded with seven boys in 1994. The chorus now numbers 100 boys and girls from second grade through high school.

Kaya Banton and Jazmin Sarinana (*center*) sing during the chorus's winter concert in December 2008. More than 1,500 people attended the event at First Pentecostal Holy Church, the largest auditorium in Chester.

baseball on the former rugby field. After an article about the fledgling chorus appeared in the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, an anonymous check for $50,000 arrived, immediately raising Alston's sights.

All along, some boys had been showing up with siblings, including some sisters; they hung out at the rehearsals and, of course, learned the music. The boys' choir went co-ed around 1999 and finally changed its name to the Chester Children's Chorus a few years later. By 2001, the chorus had grown big enough that Andrea Hoff Knox '64 was hired as a part-time managing director, handling logistics, doing publicity, and trying to raise more money. (The College contributes space and allows Alston to teach a reduced course load in exchange for foregoing sabbaticals, which he wouldn't have time for anyway.)

"When I arrived," Knox says, "there was enough money on hand to run the chorus for the next year." Increased publicity led to greater visibility, which led to support from hundreds of individuals, an unexpected $32,000 bequest, and finally to ongoing foundation grants. During the past two years, Knox says, two individuals have contributed $100,000 each. "If someone wants to top that," she smiles, "we stand ready to pick up the check." Last year, Knox became the CCC's director of development and Anjali Gallup-Diáz was named executive director.

With 100 singers and an annual budget of nearly $500,000—much of which goes into a six-week Summer Learning Program that now includes a pioneering science program taught by Swarthmore faculty members, African dance and drumming instruction, an expanded reading program, and a host of other educational and artistic activities—today's CCC seems a far cry from seven boys

LEFT: ELEFTHERIOS KOSTANS/*RIGHT*:GEORGE WIDMAN

in a borrowed van. They sing an impressive repertoire that includes Renaissance madrigals, Stevie Wonder and Beatles covers, and original gospel songs that Alston writes.

Some of the original boys have gone on to college. One, now a college senior, returned to the chorus as a summer staff member in 2008. But not everyone is a success story.

His voice choking, Alston tells of one original chorus member who was later in jail for two and a half years: "He was dealing drugs and went on one of his meth rampages, and he shot somebody. I didn't find out about it for two years, and then he wrote me a letter. He let me know what had happened and that he was still in jail. He's out now, and I'm still very, very close to him, but it's such a mess. You spend time—you spend time with children who love you so selflessly, and then what can you do except give that back in return?"

And give it in greater measure.

This year, the CCC plans to hire a full-time assistant music director who will work with the youngest singers in the training chorus. (There's also a Junior Choir on the way to the Concert Choir. All three groups perform at each of the CCC's three annual concerts.) Having an assistant will give Alston more time to work with children 11 years old and up—including a new elite Chamber Choir that debuted last fall.

The new assistant director will also create the curriculum for another ambitious initiative, the Sing to Learn Partnership. Its goal: "To provide classroom music instruction to more than 300 kindergarten and first-grade students in the Chester Upland School District starting in September 2009." The initiative will integrate music instruction into the regular curriculum, building on well-established research that shows how music learning is a distinct form of intellectual activity—and that children often learn more effectively when they employ multiple types of intelligence.

The chorus plans to add 25 more children by 2011, offering musically gifted singers in third grade or above the opportunity for long-term musical training—plus all of the other social and educational benefits that come with chorus membership.

On a Saturday morning outside the Lang Music Building, two yellow school buses and a couple of white vans bearing the CCC logo disgorge dozens of laughing, excited children. The Training Chorus arrives first, and each week the ritual is the same. A roll of paper towels goes around the steeply banked seats of the Presser Room, each child taking

"You spend time—" Alston says, "you spend time with children who love you so selflessly, and then what can you do except give that back in return?"

One of Alston's songs says:

"We've got a long way to go,
We've got a long way to go,
But we'll get there,
We'll get there,
We'll get there
With you."

one sheet. Bags of Pepperidge Farms cinnamon swirl bread are passed around, then plastic cups. (Alston always conducts a meal before he conducts music.) He and Gallup-Diáz move among the children, pouring cups of orange juice—Tropicana, no pulp—and engaging each child in a short personal conversation. These children are respected and they give respect back; they are loved, and they love in return. Soon Alston steps to the grand piano, plays a couple of chords, and the pure joy of singing starts anew.

Sixty percent of children who join remain with the chorus for five years or more—and many continue through high-school graduation. Several have gone on to college or other post-secondary education. Older chorus members such as Nkenge Daniels (*far left*), who joined as a second-grader and recently finished high school, become admired mentors for the younger kids. The modest ambitions of the original chorus have grown over time. An early choir (*lower right*), performed in the Swarthmore Friends Meetinghouse, ca. 1997.

JOHN ALSTON
IN HIS OWN WORDS

What kept you from "just passing through?"
The work was good. I didn't know where to go next, so I stayed here and grew up a bit. When I came, I was such a kid. I had a lot to learn, and I grew up at Swarthmore. And then I was lucky enough to be able to take a little bit of wisdom out to Chester. It's just a little bit, but I learned it here.

What sort of wisdom?
Knowing that there are more important things in life than polishing your own craft. It took me seven years working with the children's chorus before I really understood what I was doing and what my purpose was—trying to take care of as many folks as you can in your lifetime. I couldn't have said that 17 years ago, when I showed up at Swarthmore. When Al Bloom first used the term "ethical intelligence," I had some sense of what that meant, but it didn't really mean anything here [taps his chest]. I hadn't read enough about history or thought enough about justice. I showed up with pretty good music skills, but I didn't have the other stuff. I couldn't talk politics; I couldn't talk history. I had a very narrow education. So I started reading. And the more I read about and became familiar with American history, with how things got to be this way, the more I understood what it was that I was supposed to do.

And what are *you supposed to do?*
We can make it possible for every child in Chester to have a wonderfully productive life, to have the same opportunities as kids in the Wallingford/Strath Haven school district; to have 10,000 opportunities; to have all the adults that surround them tell them thousands of times that they're beautiful, that they're awesome, that they can learn things. I'd like children in Chester to wonder about abstract ideas, to learn a foreign language, to be curious about the rest of the world.

I dream about that stuff. I didn't have a lot of that when I was growing up. And coming to Swarthmore, I saw what happens when kids have parents who are equipped to give their children this kind of education. It's not just a question of money; it's what you value.

LEFT: JEFFREY LOTT/RIGHT: STEVEN GOLDBLATT '67

What was your idea behind the boys' choir?
I grew up in northern New Jersey, and for two years I was in the Newark Boys' Chorus. We rehearsed three hours a day, six days a week. I learned to read music, and we had a separate hour of musicianship and sight-reading. So I was doing four hours of music a day when I was 11 years old. By the time I was in the seventh grade, I knew I wanted to be a professional musician.

I was a little selfish when I started the chorus. It was very much John-driven, and it took a while for me to get beyond that. I wasn't paying attention to the kids. The idea of training a professional boys' chorus was ill informed, shall we say. All I imagined early on was creating something that sounded beautiful. That was the mission, to create something that sounded beautiful.

These kids have taught me a lot. Now, I want them to have the opportunity to develop into powerful beings, and while I hope that most of them will remain music-lovers and some of them will embrace classical music, what I really dream about for these kids is that they can go out and change the world. And that's the truth.

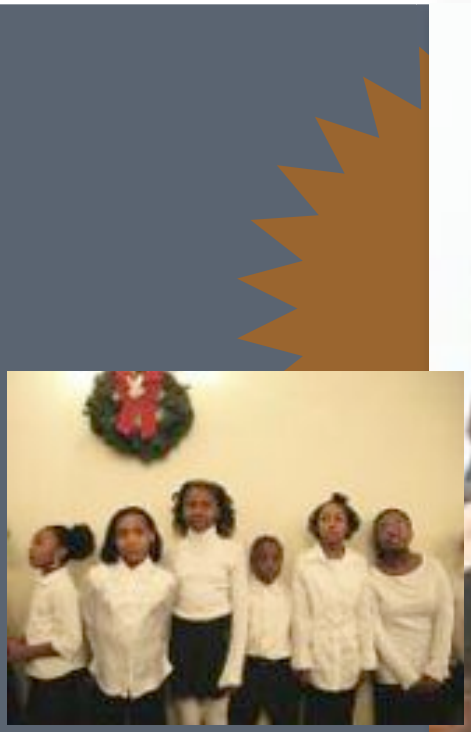
If this program doesn't do that, then it's not working. The oldest boys, I can talk to them very directly: If you guys don't grow up and become superheroes, then nobody's going to be able to change your community, because you're the guys who need to put on your superhero capes and go out and become doctors and lawyers so that you can come back and make things right. It has to begin there.

"Why do people gather together and sing? Because we crave community. Because we want to celebrate the things that we believe are beautiful. Because when we sing as a group, we become more powerful. Can you imagine the civil rights era without music?"

What would "making things right" look like in Chester?
Per capita income in Chester is $13,000. The average median household income is less than $25,000. The high-school dropout rate is more than 50 percent. When 90 percent of the high school graduates in Chester are going to college, when every family is making more than a living wage—that's what it would look like.

There should not be this many poor people living in a city so close to a place like Swarthmore. How is it justice that right here in Swarthmore there's this [college] that is one of the most exclusive and powerful and influential and difficult to get into? How is it justice that there is so much here and three miles down the road there is so little? What allows that to happen? I understand that capitalism, like justice, is blind, but still. Isn't there some way that we can have some of this goodness and some of this sweetness just move down the road?

But if everybody in Swarthmore, everybody connected to the College, and everybody who lives in this town—if everybody did everything that they could to take care of everybody close by who needed help, we



LEFT: ELEFTHERIOS KOSTANS/RIGHT: JEFFREY LOTT

ELEFTHERIOS KOSTANS

could solve it. There are smart people who live in this town. There are smart people who work at this College, and I am so appreciative for everyone's help, but there is so much more. We are holding so much back; there are people who just aren't giving it up. They just keep it. For what? How many millions of dollars do you need? Seriously. You don't. You need to give it away. You don't need to give it away mindlessly. It needs to have purpose, of course. But we have purpose.

At the last concert, I asked the adults to be the people that they want their children to be. We're constantly telling our children, "You have to learn to share." And we say these things all the time: "You know, you can't fight. You have to find a way to get along." But then we grow up and become adults, and sometimes we share, but mostly we don't. Or our idea of family is very, very limited, and we forget to practice what we preach all the time—you know, big things like "love your neighbor," which is hard to do, but it's not impossible.

What's your idea of family?
I can't say that I have an idea, because my brother and my mother and I spent so little time together growing up, so I'm just happy being around anybody that I love, and especially the children. I think you just need to go out and find as many people as you can to love and start to take care of them, as much as they need, give as much as you can. And the truth is, I'm not there yet. But these kids will help me get there.

The motto of the Chester Children's Chorus is "We use music to build strong voices, strong minds, strong spirits." How does choral music accomplish these goals?
Why do people gather together and sing? Because we crave community. Because we want to celebrate the things that we believe are beautiful. Because when we sing as a group, we become more powerful. Can you imagine the civil rights era without music? Slaves would have survived without music, but music made it possible for part of their culture to flourish, and for part of their history to survive forever. That history will be with us forever, because people will always sing spirituals. They will always be with us.

A lot of the music that I write for the chorus embraces the kids' musical traditions. I didn't understand that when I first started working with them. I had this fantasy that we would be singing Bach cantatas—that I'd be bringing the gospel of Johann Sebastian Bach to the kids. What was I thinking? I didn't know any better. I didn't know anything about Chester; I didn't know anything about what these kids needed. But when I began to pay attention to what they were telling me, the signals they were giving me, I began writing music that embraced ideas of social justice and change and compassion and sharing.

You also have to give them a groove that they understand. So I spend a few hours every week listening to their radio stations; I listen to the tempo, to the grooves that they like, to the hooks that they like, and I try to imitate that stuff in the gospel music that I write for them. I call it gospel music, and they think it's gospel music, but it's not typical praise music. It's music about justice.

But almost anything will work with children if it's done lovingly and thoughtfully. If you have that combination of love and nuttiness to be around children, then they will want to be around you.

Voices, minds, spirits...
Voices. Well, their voices get stronger. They learn to sing in dozens of languages. They explore the whole world musically. That's the easy part. Engaging minds—I try not to run a typical rehearsal, where I sing, they sing back. I try to ask the children what they're singing about. We talk about text. We talk about context. It's rarely planned. I don't come in with the lecture of the day, but if kids have questions and want to know things, then we try to talk about it. The kids don't have a lot of practice discussing big ideas in front of each other. We also need to learn to do that. Some of them need to develop into fabulous public speakers, so that they can be advocates for their community.

Are you teaching a kind of discipline—or self-discipline?
I try not to use the word "discipline." The idea of just being able to do something whether you like it or not is useful, but I think it's the wrong way to look at it. Mostly, when children are moving in a different direction from the group, it's because they need something. Rarely are children at fault. Somebody older than they are—somebody in charge—created that situation for them. So a Training Chorus

Before a concert, says sixth-grader Kenan Hilyard, "I feel nervous, excited, happy, sad, mad, embarrassed—and a bunch of other feelings all at once." Yet a standing ovation, says high-school senior Jabree Reaves, "makes you feel like you want to do the whole show over again. You just don't want to leave."

The Chester Children's Chorus aims to expand membership by 25 musically gifted children by 2011. In fall 2009, it's implementing an initiative that will marry music to learning in kindergarten and first-grade across the Chester-Upland School District. The Sing to Learn Partnership will teach music for its own sake—and use songs to reinforce classroom lessons, a concept known as arts integration. It's now well established that music is a distinct form of intellectual activity and that children learn more effectively when they employ multiple types of intelligence.

"We tell our children, 'You have to learn to share. You can't fight. You have to find a way to get along.' Then we grow up and become adults, and sometimes we share—but mostly we don't."

rehearsal is never about the group. It's always about 16 little kids. The older kids become, the more demanding I am.

You have to listen to the kids. If you're rehearsing a piece of music with 25 kids, and 20 of them aren't paying attention, they are clearly telling you that the piece is not for them. I tried to teach the "Hallelujah Chorus" four years ago. I sang a line and asked them to sing it back, and they sang half-heartedly. I sang it again, and again they sang it back half-heartedly. I remember being so disappointed. I asked them, "Do you guys like this? This is one of the greatest pieces ever written—Handel's 'Hallelujah Chorus.' And they said no, it's boring, it just keeps saying the same thing over and over again. They weren't ready for it, and there was nothing I could do to make them ready for that piece—but I brought it back last year, when they were ready. This time they loved it. They absolutely loved it—and the audience gave them a standing ovation.

What's the relationship between the chorus and the Chester Upland School of the Arts?
They're separate organizations, but the big idea is the same—to help as many children as possible. In the last five years, again as I began to pay more attention to the children and to understand what the chorus really should be, I was always a bit disheartened and sad when I would talk to them about what they had done in school and heard their lack of excitement, their lack of wonder about the day's lessons. I thought, you've been in school for six hours; you should be able to tell me something. There should be something wonderful that you like. I wasn't quite sure what that something was, so that's when we started dreaming about building a school, about five years ago in earnest, and then four years ago we started doing research, and three years ago we got very serious about fundraising, and here we are, a school later.

Are you a religious person?
I don't have a standard religious practice, but I think very deeply about God, and I'm sure that I was put on this planet to do this work with these children. I am sure that is how we are all supposed to do God's work, through helping others. Jesus spent so much time talking about that, and he spent so little time talking about the stuff that we often fight about. And here we are, 2,000 years later, still learning to love our neighbors as ourselves. We just cannot figure that out. And so I'm going to sing about it and talk about it and ask folks for money so that we can spread that word until I can't do it anymore. That's the truth.

Amen.

Ja'Quay Lundy and Jabree Reaves (*below, with Alston*) are among several chorus members who study music theory after weekly chorus rehearsals. Lundy wrote a school paper about Alston: "[My teacher] said, if you had to pick one person in the world that was a hero and an inspiration, who would it be? I picked John. His songs are so beautiful—it's beautiful how he can share that with the world."

LEFT: JEFFREY LOTT/RIGHT: JONATHAN HODGSON

connections

SWARTHMORE TRAVELS 2009

There are still two opportunities to take part in Swarthmore's Alumni College Abroad program during 2009.

This summer, you can discover the best of Switzerland in the good company of Associate Professor of Chemistry and Biochemistry Paul Rablen on a unique **alpine walking adventure** from July 25 to Aug. 2. On this trip, you will enjoy the consummate views, fine accommodations, and delectable food and wine for which Switzerland is renowned. Your days will be spent exploring the beautiful countryside and spectacular mountains on easy-to-moderate hikes and via rides on funiculars, gondolas, and cog railways.

This fall, travel to **Bordeaux and the Dordogne.** From Sept. 29 to Oct. 9, you will explore the treasures of Bordeaux, proclaimed a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2007, as well as the picturesque and enchanting region of the Dordogne, where you will experience the authentic flavor of southwestern France. You will spend seven nights in the medieval towns of Sarlat-le-Canéda and Rocamadour; view prehistoric cave art at Lascaux II; tread in the footsteps of Richard the Lionheart at Beynac; and savor the rustic flavors of Périgord's culinary delights. Associate Professor of French Carina Yervasi will lead you through Sarlat's 14th-century cobblestone streets, into delightful cafes, and around a traditional open-air market. This trip is co-sponsored by Dartmouth College and also features Dartmouth's Professor Emeritus James Heffernan, who will join Yervasi in lecturing on the region's diverse artistic impact on film and literature.

For more information, please call (800) 789-9738, or e-mail alumni_travel@swarthmore.edu.

HOPE AND COURAGE

ALUMNI COLLEGE JUNE 22–25

It's difficult to imagine a better time for Swarthmoreans to gather to discuss hope and courage. Three faculty lecturers—economist Amanda Bayer, political scientist Ben Berger, and Russian language and literature professor Sibelan Forrester— will explore topics in their areas of expertise. Registration materials—including course descriptions and reading lists—will be mailed in mid-April. You may also e-mail alumni@swarthmore.edu or call (610) 328-8402 for more information. Please join us for what promises to be an exciting week!

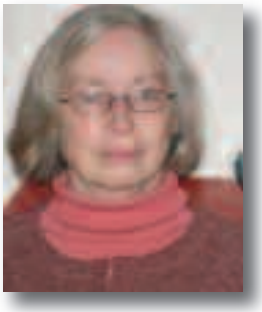
Alumni Council Presents Candidates for Ratification

This spring, for the first time, new members of the Swarthmore Alumni Council will be approved as a slate rather than elected as individuals. As reported in the July 2008 *Bulletin*, the Council ratified the new selection method at its spring 2008 meeting. Last fall, the Council nominating committee reviewed candidates for 14 upcoming vacancies and chose a set of candidates and alternates. The final candidates agreed to serve 3-year terms, after which the slate was approved by the nominating committee and ratified by the full Council.

The Council now asks alumni to ratify this slate of candidates by Friday, May 22. Alumni may do this by either returning the postcard inserted on p. 47 of the magazine or by going online to www.swarthmore.edu/council.xml. This Web site has full profiles of each of the candidates on the slate. To complete the process online, alumni will need to log into the Swarthmore Online Community. Those who are not yet registered will need their Swarthmore ID number, located above their name on the mailing label of this magazine.

Alumni are also encouraged to suggest candidates for consideration on next year's slate. In selecting new members, the nominating committee considers factors such as geographic location, class year, a demonstrated interest in the College through volunteer service, participation in College-sponsored activities, and a consistent record of giving as well as volunteer participation in other organizations. Alumni may nominate a candidate (including themselves) on the postcard, online, or at any time by e-mailing alumni@swarthmore.edu. Nominations received by Oct. 1 of a given year will be considered for the following year's slate.

Zone A: Del., Pa.



Deborah Smith Dempsey '57
Philadelphia, Pa.
Department head, English (retired)
Springside School

Joshua Farber '02
Pittsburgh, Pa.
Attorney
Meyer Unkovic & Scott

Zone B: N.J., N.Y.

Danielle Moss Lee '90
New York City
President & CEO
Harlem Educational Activities Fund

Steven Charles Kyle '77
Lansing, N.Y.
Professor of applied economics
Cornell University

Zone C: Conn., Maine, Mass., N.H., R.I., Vt.

Nina Paynter '97
Jamaica Plain, Mass.
Instructor in medicine
Brigham & Women's Hospital and Harvard Medical School

Albert J. "Sandy" Williams III '62
Woods Hole, Mass.
Scientist emeritus
Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution

Zone D: D.C., Md., Va.

Emily Aubrey '89
Baltimore, Md.
Self-employed childbirth instructor and freelance musician

Rohit Malhotra '95
Charlottesville, Va.
Physician
University of Virginia Health Sciences Center

Zone E: Ill., Ind., Iowa, Kan., Mich., Minn., Mo., Neb., N.D., Ohio, Okla., S.D., Texas, W.Va., Wis.

Richard Wilson '73
Green Bay, Wis.
Accountant
Episcopal Diocese of
Fond du Lac

Lynda Yankaskas '99
Richmond, Ind.
Visiting assistant professor
of history
Earlham College

Zone F: Ala., Ark., Fla., Ga., Ky., La., Miss., N.C., S.C., Tenn., territories, dependencies, and international

Michael Fields '69
Atlanta, Ga.
News director
Public Broadcasting of
Atlanta/WABE-FM

Carol Church Holm-Hansen '76
Vollen, Norway
Senior scientist, Norwegian
Institute of Public Health, Div.
of Infectious Disease Control

Zone G—Alaska, Ariz., Calif., Colo., Hawaii, Idaho, Mont., Nev., N.M., Ore., Utah, Wash., Wyo.

Linda Bovard '72
Eugene, Ore.
President and consultant
Bovard Consulting LLC

David Ko '92
San Mateo, Calif.
Dir. of special projects, Pillsbury
Winthrop Shaw Pittman, LLP

Herrin Hopper '98 and **Jennifer Klein '98** (*above*) ran the Disneyland Half Marathon in Anaheim, Calif., last September. They showed their Swarthmore pride by customizing their race gear to say "See Swatties Run" on the front, and "Fear the Phoenix" on the back. We want to know where you have been showing off your Swarthmore gear. As you travel the world for business or pleasure, snap a photo of yourself in your stylish Swarthmore duds and it may land here in a future issue of the *Bulletin*. Send digital photos to alumni@swarthmore.edu. Please note who is in the picture and where it was taken. (P.S.: You can order Swat gear at www.bookstore.swarthmore.edu.)

Alumni Profile

ELIZABETH REDDEN

Heat from the Earth

SAM ASHELMAN '37 WANTS TO PRODUCE FACTORY-BUILT HOUSES THAT WILL BE HEATED GEOTHERMALLY.

Temperatures linger in the teens when I visit Sam Ashelman at his home in Berkeley Springs, W.Va. Powder speckles unforgiving ground, but deep inside the frozen earth flows Ashelman's source of warmth.

The whole mountainous landscape visible from his living room used to belong to Ashelman, composing Coolfont Resort, a 1,300-acre wilderness retreat he long owned and which he sold in 2005. A prostate problem had confined him to the hospital for eight months. "My family gave up on me, almost, but I fooled them and got better," he says.

Since then, a new business idea has kept him busy. If I were to write an honest article, he tells me, this is what I would write: "Sam has some ideas about merging factory-built houses with heat coming from inside the earth. He's looking for some good people to do that, and he's looking to bring some additional capital into the business."

Ashelman is motivated by principle and by profit. On the latter point, the businessman says: "If you make the money, you can give it away." On the former, he is preoccupied by carbon dioxide emissions and global warming, and sees geothermal heating as part of the solution. In discussing the possibility that leaking heart valves could compel him to cut work way back, he recites a phrase—"working toward a better world"—he's used to characterize his life's work. It's precisely how he described his work operating Coolfont, a center for RE+Creation, not recreation, in another interview with me, seven years before.

"I'm reluctant to quit right now because I think we can take a step toward a better world, by doing these factory and geothermal combinations," Ashelman says.

Ashelman wants to construct the houses in already-established factories and hopes he can interest Wal-Mart in marketing and ultimately sponsoring communities of 1,000-, 1,155-, and 1,430-square foot prefabricated homes. They would be affordable homes—in the $200,000-and-under range, he hopes. "I think the big market is not for the expensive houses today. It's going to be for the small houses."

"If we are successful at getting Wal-Mart to help us sell these and then recruit some smart Swarthmore graduates to sell these houses to ordinary people, we'll have a good money-making machine here," he says.

He needs a few good people first. "I need a good sales manager. I need a good account- ing department, you see. I need a good group of people who can put the house together," he says.

Carr Everbach, a professor of engineering and chair of Swarthmore's sustainability committee, first met Ashelman at last year's Jonathan R. Lax '71 Conference on Entrepreneurship, which focused on "The Business of Sustainability."

"I endorse the philosophy; I think, practically, it could work," says Everbach. "He's catching the zeitgeist of our time, which is sustainability."

"I'm not going to resign my position at Swarthmore and join this company and see if it works out," Everbach continues, but he has, per Ashelman's request, been on the lookout for good graduates to send his way.

On this January day, Liz Sutton—Ashelman's secretary of five months—prepares lunch: thick New England clam chowder and grilled cheese sandwiches. Afterwards, we drive to see a four-bedroom, 3½-bathroom, just-completed demonstration house, the third that Ashelman has built to be fueled by ground-source heat pumps. The three-story cedar house gleams with plenty of windows and sits on a wooded, two-acre lot in Berkeley Springs; it is newly on the market. "Live in the house of the future, today," boasts a flyer.

"And here's the dance floor," Ashelman says, as we descend the stairs into a large room with a shimmering hardwood floor that, indeed, invites a dance. The house's heat surfaces from five holes drilled 160 feet into the earth. Five pipes snake into the house, a "no CO2" zone.

Ashelman is 95 today; by the time you read this, he will have turned 96. As we leave the home behind, he tells me he planted 75 arborvitae to block the view of the closest house uphill. And 100 daffodils too.

—Elizabeth Redden '05

Alumni Profile

JOSH JONES

Sailboat Racing—Fun But Serious Business

"... HOURS OF INCREDIBLE BOREDOM, INTERRUPTED BY MOMENTS OF STARK TERROR."

There's a saying that "sailboat racing is hours of incredible boredom, interrupted by moments of stark terror." Despite this assessment of the sport, Arlene Dannenberg Bowes '72 is undeterred.

The Philadelphia native is competitive and enjoys a challenge. As a Swarthmore freshman, she helped classmates deliver a Dickerson 35 ketch from Philadelphia to Cape May, during which they were caught up in a squall near the mouth of the Delaware Bay. In 1973, she encountered another kind of challenge when she entered the School of Dental Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania (Penn) at a time when only one percent of American dentists were women.

Bowes is now on the faculty at the school where she earned her dental degree 30 years ago. Since moving to Clifton, Va., she travels to Penn weekly. She also serves as a dental officer with the U.S. Public Health Service (USPHS), which she joined in 1976, periodically helping on Native American reservations or with natural disasters such as Hurricane Katrina. Her first USPHS assignment after Penn was as a dental officer at the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy (USMMA) in Kings Point, N.Y. There, she met her husband Stephen Bowes, a marine engineer and sailor.

Today, the couple races the *Apparition,* a Frers 41 sloop, which they purchased 10 years ago. The racer-cruiser, designed two decades ago by Germán Frers, an Argentine design group, has eight berths, a galley and enclosed head—that's nautical jargon for a kitchen and a bathroom with a door, hanging lockers, and a navigation station.

Assisted by a crew of eight, the Boweses annually participate in about 15 events, most involving multiple races. They plot their course on a GPS system and track the competition with a satellite phone.

The first race the Boweses entered with their 15,000 lb. vessel was an eye-opener. "We learned, too late, that the Annapolis racers were professional sailors," Arlene says. "For example, third place in a three-hour race might mean you were 30 seconds behind the winner."

Since then, they've always placed in the upper third of their fleet and brought home their share of trophies, with Stephen at the helm, and Arlene working as pitcrew, a central position from which she assists in raising and lowering sails. "Since I don't weigh much compared to the rugby players who race with us, I can haul sails or fetch Snickers bars from below deck without upsetting the boat's trim, " she says.

The couple usually races off Annapolis, Md., but has also participated in Block Island (R.I.) and Key West (Fla.) Race Weeks. Twice, they have competed in the Bermuda Ocean Race, 750 nautical miles and three to seven days from Annapolis. During a 2004 race on the Chesapeake Bay, the *Apparition* was caught in the tail end of Hurricane Ivan. "With the wind at 40 knots, six-foot seas, and the boat traveling at a recording-breaking 13 knots, we were flying," Arlene recalls. "Then we heard a loud snap. We duct taped the 17-foot broken aluminum boom and headed back. It took four nauseating hours to return to dock, a trip that had taken an hour going south."

Before the sailors can revel in the thrill of racing, the boat must be maintained and stocked. "Sailboat racing is a fun but serious business," says Arlene. The sails are Kevlar or carbon fiber and need to be replaced every three or four years. High-tech lines (ropes) are routinely replaced since they carry huge loads, and the electronics require periodic maintenance. The boat's hull must be kept clean and smooth for speed," Arlene says. Food, water, safety gear, spare parts, tools, and medical supplies must be on board. Before their first race to Bermuda, the couple became emergency medical technicians and completed safety-at-sea courses.

When the winds lessen in late summer, Stephen takes a 13-foot Laser out on the Occoquan River, which feeds into the Potomac River; Arlene often skims quietly across the same waters in her 33 lb. kayak.

"We have found over the years what it means to be a team, a group stronger as a whole than individually, " Arlene says. "The synergy applies to our professional lives as well as our racing experiences."

—Susan Cousins Breen

Alumni Profile

FAMILY CARE INTERNATIONAL

Maternal Health Matters

ANN STARRS '84 FOUNDED AN INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION IN WHICH WOMEN HELP WOMEN.

Ann Starrs hopes that someday she will lose her job. Why? That would mean that her work as president of Family Care International (FCI) is no longer needed. "Ultimately, as with any development work, you're really trying to work yourself out of a job," she says, adding wryly, "I don't think that's going to happen anytime too soon."

Family Care International (www.family-careintl.org) is an international nonprofit dedicated to improving women's health during pregnancy and childbirth in the developing world. With maternal mortality rates in Africa ranging from 100 to 500 times higher than those in Western countries like the United States, Starrs has much to do.

Starrs was motivated to co-found FCI in 1987 when the World Health Organization released a global estimate of how many women die annually from pregnancy and childbirth complications—a number never discussed until then, Starr says.

That number? Half a million—"one woman dying every minute from the complications of pregnancy and childbirth. And 99 percent of those deaths occur in the developing world." In the face of this, with only two employees, FCI was born. Today, it has a New York office, field offices in five African countries and two in Latin America, and program activities in 12 more countries.

Some of Starr's early work was in Uganda, helping a coalition of local women's groups organize a community education program for safer motherhood.

"I went out there and worked with them to design a fairly small (about a half-million dollar) project to recruit and train women in the community to be pregnancy monitors—to identify pregnant women in the community and educate them about risk factors during their pregnancy," she says. "The midwifery, providing the actual health care, is the responsibility of the government. But usage was very low, so we were trying to get women—and, in particular, men—to understand the importance of good care during pregnancy, especially the importance of giving birth in a health facility, with a skilled attendant present."

Her time working abroad, Starrs says, has broadened her perspective on international work. "It's humbling to be aware that you can design these projects, but implementation can be very challenging, much more complicated than you necessarily envision."

Although Starrs still travels for FCI, much of her travel these days is devoted to fund-raising, networking, attending conferences, and making presentations. "As head of the organization, I don't get to do as much of what I call the 'fun stuff'—really seeing the projects on the ground," she says.

Her networking pays off, though. FCI works with the United Nations and its affiliated agencies, the World Health Organization, and other nonprofit groups. Starrs hopes that her organization can serve as a coordinating bridge between maternal health advocacy and groups helping with related health issues in developing countries.

For example, she bemoans the fact that maternal health is often passed over in favor of an emphasis on childhood health. Not wishing to downplay childhood health initiatives, she adds, "I have two myself—children are important." Still, she argues that maternal and childhood health shouldn't be seen—or funded—as discrete issues. "There's a link, obviously, between mothers and children. You'd be surprised how often the UN agencies and others can ignore that link."

Similarly, Starrs wants to bring family-planning advocacy into a broader discussion of maternal health. "We're really trying to bring the weight of both the maternal health community and the reproductive and family planning community together to advocate together for funding and attention to these issues," she says.

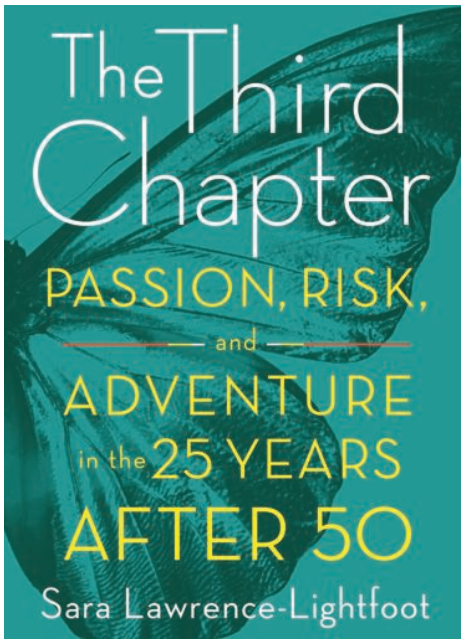
Despite ever-present discouraging statistics about maternal mortality and difficulty fundraising in a worsening economic climate, Starrs remains hopeful. "I think there's a lot of momentum around this issue right now... I think there's going to be significant progress in this area over the next five to six years." She also hopes Family Care International will grow—to an extent.

"One of my dreams, or hopes, is that we could expand and start some programs in Asia. I don't want FCI to become huge. I'd hate to run an organization where I don't know everybody in it by name. But we're doing really good work, and I'd love to be able to do more of it in places where we can really make a difference."

—Michael Lott

Over 50? Welcome to the Age of Curiosity, Courage, and Passion

Sara Lawrence-Lightfoot '66, *The Third Chapter: Passion, Risk, and Adventure in the 25 Years After 50,* Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2009



The Third Chapter reminds me of conversations I have savored at Swarthmore. Like those, Sara Lawrence-Lightfoot's book invites new thinking about complex human issues, shares deep reflections about personal experience, invokes the findings of scholarly research, and applies intelligent analysis—all with graceful turns of phrase—concluding with a few suggestions on how to save the world.

The foundation of the book is a series of conversations the author shared with 40 individuals who are in the stage of life she calls the Third Chapter—the 25 Years After 50. Lawrence-Lightfoot spent two years traveling the United States, interviewing men and women in their 50s, 60s, and 70s who have entered this new life stage with curiosity, courage, and passion. Her book tells their stories, often in their own voices, offering interpretations of their experiences with reference to literature and developmental psychology as well as to sociological studies of aging and the life course. We hear the stories of individuals such as a corporate lawyer who becomes engaged with a community garden, a successful businesswoman whose Third Chapter takes her to Kosovo to work with children suffering the effects of war, a journalist and newspaper executive who begins to learn to play jazz piano at age 60, and the director of a major nonprofit who resigns to enter divinity school.

There are many reasons to rcommend this book not only to readers who are in their own Third Chapter but also to those who are in earlier installments of their life stories. Lawrence-Lightfoot is correct that a stage of life between work and death is very new in human history. Adventuresome and creative individuals like those she interviewed are bringing to that new stage meanings that will shape the expectations and the experiences of all who will write their own Third Chapters in the future.

The author is a talented listener who draws from her interview partners not only accounts of their accomplishments but also of the journeys that preceded them. Like classic quest stories, these narratives recount fears, hesitations, obstacles, vulnerabilities, and ghosts from the past that must be recognized and overcome before the liberations and opportunities of a new life stage can be perceived and enjoyed. Among the greatest challenges described are the constraints that norms and stereotypes about aging place on living life to the full at any age. Lawrence-Lightfoot writes, "[this book] challenges the still-prevailing and anachronistic images of aging by documenting and revealing the ways in which the years between 50 and 75 may, in fact, be the most transformative and generative time in our lives...."

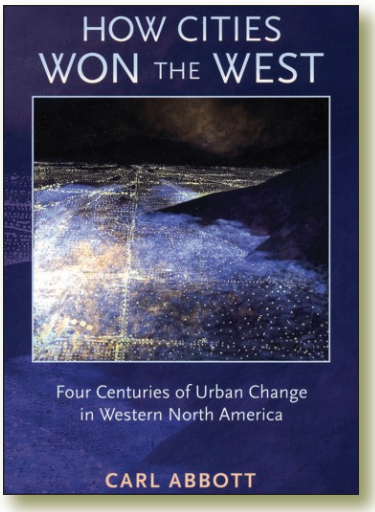
Even a book as abundant and rewarding as *The Third Chapter* cannot include everything without adding many more chapters of its own. We do not hear from individuals who are poor, or learn about the life course in other cultures, or see the ways that age peers in retirement communities may foster the creative adventures Lawrence-Lightfoot recounts. The author herself points out that the people she interviews all enjoy privileged status. They are comfortable (or more) economically and have both educational and occupational backgrounds that provide access to many resources and relationships that enhance their ability to take risks and be creative in a new stage of life. From my perspective as an anthropologist/gerontologist, I noted that although many of the individuals Lawrence-Lightfoot interviewed described their life transitions as "ethnographic" or "anthropological" excursions into unfamiliar territory, the author does not place her work in cross-cultural perspective. Doing this would not undermine her conclusions, but enhance them. The constraints of a strictly staged life course, with chronological markers at every sharply defined boundary, seem even more arbitrary if compared with cultures without these stages. From this point of view, the book title's definition of Third Chapter as the "25 years after 50" is both a fitting reminder of American views about aging and somewhat at odds with the author's admiration of individuals who have transcended chronologically defined expectations.

Lawrence-Lightfoot and the people she talks with focus mainly on individuals and the support they receive from significant people in their lives. Her reference to retirement communities contrasts the "segregation, isolation, and recreation" of early versions to the "yearning for lives of active engagement, purposefulness, and new learning" older people want now. My own research in retirement communities persuades me that they are very often the settings for just the kind of freedom from the constraint of age norms and opportunity for new learning that Lawrence-Lightfoot admires.

Like any good Swarthmorean, Sara Lawrence-Lightfoot uses what she has learned as the basis for proposals about how to make the world a better place: We need to transform the parameters of our educational system to encompass lifelong learning and to reduce generational segregation. We need to innovate in the structure of work lives to increase opportunities for re-inventing ourselves, resting, and re-balancing work, love, family, community, and play. We need to open channels for the motivation and talent many Americans want to use in service to others during their Third Chapter.

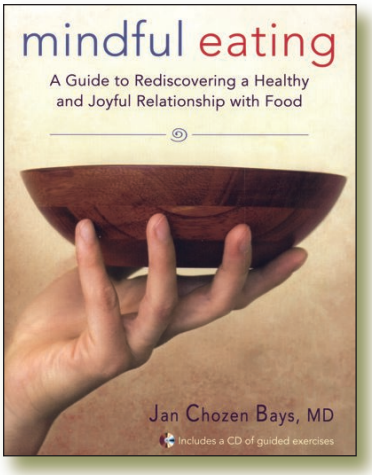
Lawrence-Lightfoot's book offers inspiration, guidance, and encouragement for fuller appreciation of the full lifespan to readers of any age.

—Jennie Keith
Centennial Professor Emerita
of Anthropology and Provost Emerita



Carl Abbott '66, *How Cities Won the West,* University of New Mexico Press, 2008. From the Gulf of Alaska to the Mississippi River and from the binational metropolis of San Diego-Tijuana to the Prairie Province capitals of Canada, the author explores the complex urban history of western Canada and the United States.

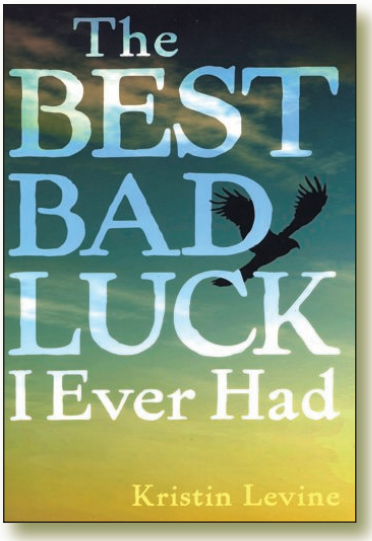
Dean Baker '80, *Plunder and Blunder: The Rise and Fall of the Bubble Economy,* PoliPointPress, LLC, 2009. The author chronicles the growth and collapse of the stock and housing bubbles that he foresaw.



Jan (Burgess) Chozen Bays '66, *Mindful Eating: A Guide to Rediscovering a Healthy and Joyful Relationship With Food,* Shambhala Publications Inc., 2009. This book offers suggestions on how focusing on the tastes, smells, thoughts, and feelings that arise at mealtimes can help people with eating disorders and other food issues. (CD included)

Jacqueline Carey '77, *It's a Crime,* Ballantine Books, 2008. This novel portrays the dire costs of today's corporate culture of runaway greed in a fractured landscape filled with CEOs-turned-robber barons, privileged lives punctured by wretched excess, and personal relationships put to the ultimate test.

Peter Cohan '79, *You Can't Order Change: Lessons From Jim McNerney's Turnaround at Boeing,* Portfolio, 2008. The author explores what sets the Boeing CEO apart from other CEOs.



Kristin (Sims) Levine '97, *The Best Bad Luck I Ever Had,* G.P. Putnam's Sons, 2009. In this historical novel, set in 1917 Alabama and inspired by the author's family history, a friendship between a white farm boy and an African American city girl sends ripples through a rural town.

William Cohen '85, *Embodied: Victorian Literature and the Senses,* University of Minnesota Press, 2009. The author considers the meaning of sensory encounters in works by a variety of Victorian authors.

Theodor Nelson '59, *Geeks Bearing Gifts: How the Computer World Got This Way,* Mindful Press, 2008. The inventor of "hypertext," who anticipated and inspired the World Wide Web, takes a look at computer history in a series of short, punchy chapters.

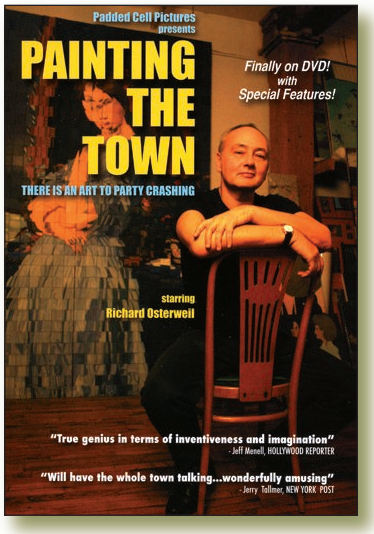
Osha Neumann '61, *Up Against the Wall Motherf**cker,* Seven Stories Press, 2008. The founding member of the '60s anarchist group Motherfuckers, Neumann chronicles their activities, exploring the meaning of past rebellions for current rebels.

Christine Shepardson '94, *Anti-Judaism and Christian Orthodoxy: Ephrem's Hymns in Fourth-Century Syria,* The Catholic University of America Press, 2008. This book investigates the anti-Jewish and anti-Judaizing rhetoric of Ephrem, a fourth-century poet and theologian from eastern Roman Syria.

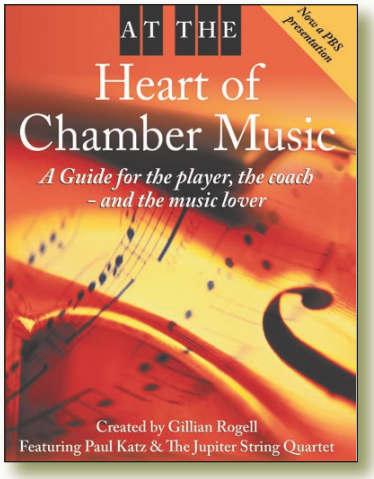
Irene Silverblatt '70 and **Helene Silverblatt '70** (co-editors and co-translators), *Harvest of Blossoms: Poems From a Life Cut Short,* by Selma Meerbaum-Eisinger, Northwestern University Press, 2008. A first English translation of these insightful poems brings to life a teenage Holocaust victim who moves readers with the riveting honesty and courage of her verses.

Amy Singer '82, *Charity in Islamic Societies,* Cambridge University Press, 2008. The author demonstrates how historical circumstances, social status, gender, age, and other factors interacted with religious ideals to create a rich variety of charitable practices, from the beginnings of Islam to the present day.

Alexandra Michel and **Stanton Wortham '85,** *Bullish on Uncertainty: How Organizational Cultures Transform Participants,* Cambridge University Press, 2009. This work shows how two successful investment banks trained their people and built their cultures in different ways, leading to strikingly different levels of success in today's uncertain economic times.

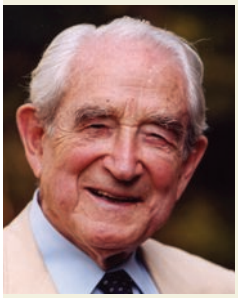


Richard Osterweil '74 (star), *Painting the Town: There is an Art to Party Crashing,* Behar and Sackner, Padded Cell Pictures, 2008. The hit documentary features struggling painter, party-crasher, cabbie, and raconteur Osterweil, as he shares his outrageous efforts to experience how the other half lives.



Gillian Rogell '68, *At the Heart of Chamber Music: A Guide for the Player, the Coach—and the Music Lover,* Musicalchemy, 2008. This first-of-its-kind chamber music DVD, featuring the Jupiter Quartet and Paul Katz, founding cellist of the Cleveland String Quartet, is aimed at helping young professional string players become good chamber music coaches.

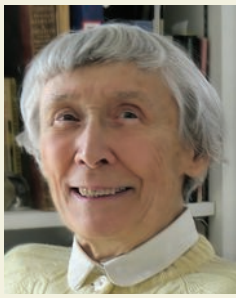
Alumni Achievements



Robert Browning '34,

a former member of the Swarthmore College Board of Managers, died on Jan. 22 at age 96. Browning worked for General Electric for 10 years, and then, was one of the original 10 partners of the consulting firm now known as Booz Allen Hamilton, where he remained until his retirement in 1968. Fulfilling a lifelong dream of owning a farm, Browning then moved from Philadelphia to North Pomfret, Vt. He was an active member of each community in which he lived, during his time in Pennsylvania and in his later life in Vermont. He served as a board member for many institutions, including Germantown [Pa.] Hospital, the Pomfret [Vt.] Planning Commission, and the Ottauquechee [Vt.] Health Center. Browning's greatest pride in his lengthy service career was being chairman of the Swarthmore Board of Managers and the Vermont Land Trust.

Ruth Wolf Page '42



recently published a compilation of servicepersons' experiences during World War II with three other residents of the Wake Robin Continuing Care Retirement Community in Shelburne, Vt. The quartet spent almost three years fact-checking, editing, and collecting photos of the authors in uniform during the 1940s for the book *Our Great War*. An astounding 65 Wake Robin residents contributed their wartime tales to the collection. The book contains stories from the U.S., Atlantic, and Pacific services, Europe, the Far East, and even a piece by a soldier who was present for a full day of trials in Japan following the war—he observed Hidelei Tojo, Emperor Hirohito, and all the famous Japanese admirals in the courtroom. The volume also includes a medical section with stories by doctors, nurses, and aides, members of the Navy and Marines, and even an admiral and provides a glimpse into what often were residents' unshared memories. According to Page: "Many of the stories had never been told before—even to family members—because the memories were in many cases too bloody and horrendous. But 60 years later, they felt able to write the details of their experiences."

Daniel Beshers '49

was awarded the Zener Medal at the International Conference on Internal Friction and Mechanical Spectroscopy in Perugia, Italy, last summer. The award recognizes a lifetime of measuring and explaining evidence of atomic motion inside crystalline solids, particularly in ferromagnetic materials. A member of the Columbia University faculty since 1957, Beshers, professor emeritus of metallurgy at Columbia's Henry Krumb School of Mines, is a special lecturer in the materials science and engineering program in the department of applied physics and applied mathematics at the university. His career has focused mainly on internal friction; particularly noteworthy are studies which established the detailed path of the diffusion of carbon atoms in iron, others which revealed the law of breakaway of dislocations from surrounding impurities, and others which gave new insights into the nature of ferromagnetic hysteresis. Beshers is a life member of the Minerals, Metals, and Materials Society and ASM International—The Materials Information Society—and a member of Sigma Xi. He has also received the Education Award from the New York chapter of ASM.

Alumni Achievements

Mark Risk '78

was elected and installed as a fellow of the College of Labor and Employment Lawyers last September. The College, established in 1995, recognizes lawyers for demonstrating through sustained performance, high professional qualifications and ethical standards as well as character, integrity, and leadership. Risk practices in New York City, principally representing individuals in employment disputes. He edits and contributes to *Labor and Employment Law*, the quarterly newsletter of the American Bar Association's Section of Labor and Employment Law. He teaches in advocacy skills programs for the National Institute for Trial Advocacy and is on the adjunct faculty at Hofstra University Law School. A frequent speaker on employment law topics, he is on the advisory board of the NYU Law Center for Labor and Employment Law.

Scott Cowger '82

was named to the sixth annual *Mainebiz* Next List for alternative energy efforts at his inn and conference center in Hallowell, Maine (MapleBb.com). Each year, *Mainebiz*, a business news publication, selects a group of 10 innovative business leaders for inclusion on their Next List. Cowger, co-owner of the Maple Hill Farm Bed and Breakfast Inn and Conference Center, invested in alternative energy five years ago with his partner, Vince Hannan. The results thus far are a 10-kilowatt wind turbine, 126 photovoltaic panels, and 202 vacuum tubes for solar hot water that collectively save Cowger $1,000 a month in electricity costs, reduce the inn's oil consumption by 20 percent, and produce about half of the facility's energy. The Maine Department of Environmental Protection awarded the first "Environmental Leader" Green Lodging Inn Certification to Maple Hill Farm in 2005. Cowger expounds the importance of embracing social responsibility in the midst of success, "We need to make a personal commitment to protecting the environment and improving it, because humans have devastated it for some time."

Amy McBride Barker '92

was honored with the Governor's Award of Excellence in Humanities Education from the Missouri Humanities Council (MHC) in October. The Council celebrates those who have contributed to the appreciation of history, literature, and the culture of Missouri. Nominated by the community, Barker is the Advanced Placement English literature and composition teacher at Kirkwood [Mo.] High School, where she has been inspiring students to "learn what it means to be human" through literature for 12 years. Kirkwood High School Principal Dave Holley says, "Amy Barker is one of the most enthusiastic and passionate teachers we have, and she's one of the teachers that every kid wants to have." Barker's students attest to her passion and energy in the classroom; through that passion and energy, she communicates a love of reading and an unreserved willingness to dive into literature analysis. The executive director of the MHC calls Barker "an incredible gift to her students and to humanities education in Missouri."

Pablo Reid Mitchell '92

was recently named a Class of 2008 Emerging Scholar by *Diverse: Issues in Higher Education*. The magazine, dedicated to providing information about higher education in the context of educating a growing number of minority students, selects a group of 10 scholars under the age of 40 for their annual list. Mitchell's first book *Coyote Nation: Sexuality, Race, and Conquest in Modernizing New Mexico, 1880-1920* received the 2007 Ray Allen Billington prize from the Organization of American Historians for the best book in American frontier history. He is an associate professor of history at Oberlin College, where he also mentors Mellon-Mays undergraduate fellows. He is currently working on a new book, *West of Sex: The Making of Latino America, 1900-1930*, which continues his exploration of Latino sexuality. After its completion, he plans to write a history of American people of mixed ancestry.

On and Off the Paternoster

THE PATERNOSTER IS THE MOST EXISTENTIAL OF CONTRAPTIONS. IN THEORY, YOU COULD STAY ON IT FOREVER.

By Jeffrey Scheuer '75
Illustration by Nancy Harrison

RECENTLY, WHILE IN MY BASEMENT DIGGING through old shopping bags full of philosophy books, I came across a flaky brown paperback titled *Moral Philosophy: A Program of Study for Honors Students*. Published for the Swarthmore College Philosophy Department in the 1940s, it was an 81-page outline for a 16-week seminar—replete with potential honors exam questions. A remnant of my father's signature from 60 years ago was visible on its heavily chipped front cover.

The book is a casual family heirloom, passed to me during my own Swarthmore years. My father, Walter Scheuer '44—like my mother, Marge Pearlman Scheuer '48—had been an honors economics major with an interest in philosophy. I will turn it over to my son, who is currently studying philosophy at Reed College.

Moral philosophy wasn't exactly on my front burner when I arrived at Swarthmore in fall 1971. I'd entertained vague notions of becoming a writer and considered majoring in history. In that first semester, I enrolled in Paul Beik's Modern Europe. The kindly Professor Beik encouraged me to continue in Clio's direction. The following spring, I was less impressive in Bernard Smith's Later Medieval Europe, chosen mainly to test Smith's reputation as a great and demanding teacher. He was one.

That same semester, I sampled Hans Oberdiek's Philosophy 1 and was hooked from the first assignment—Descartes' *First Meditation*. Something in it about a ball of wax intrigued me, and I liked the sound of *Cogito, ergo sum*, even though I had doubts about the actual doctrine. By the end of the term, philosophy had become my major, and during my next three years at Swarthmore, I thought, therefore I was. (Now, I consider it a good day if I think at all, having long ago abandoned any hope of confirming my existence.)

I was a good enough student, no more. After an intellectually lackluster high-school career, reading philosophy pried open my mind and filled it with questions. Nearly everything I learned of any importance was learned at Swarthmore—especially in those philosophy courses and seminars. Nothing else compares.

Eventually, I became aware of the Philosophy Department's distinguished history. The names that echoed through Trotter and the old Parrish Annex, where the department was housed in those days, included Roderick Firth, Monroe Beardsley, Maurice Mandelbaum, and Brand Blanshard. By the 1970s, Oberdiek, Hugh Lacey, Richard Schuldenfrei, and Charles Raff formed a small but very able crew. There was also a steady trickle of visiting professors, cannily selected to show off the superiority of Swarthmore's department.

During sophomore year, I came to equate great moral questions with the taste of strong black tea, which emerged from Gil Stott's picnic basket at 4 p.m., when we met for

ethics class in his Parrish Hall office. There, I first made contact with Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* and other great works of moral philosophy. I was one of the hundreds of students whom Gil befriended over the decades.

Schuldenfrei's epistemology course introduced me to the genius of David Hume, John Dewey, and C.I. Lewis, among others. From Richie, I acquired a good example of inductive reasoning: A man falls off the Empire State Building and, as he passes the 50th floor, he observes, "So far, so good."

During my final semester, in spring 1975, the elegant mysteries of Kant were revealed —or, at least, some of them—in Oberdiek's attic study. The special honors seminar on Kant included five philosophy majors, Hans, and Professor Ken Sharpe from political science.

This is how, in my last months at the College, I came to read much of Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*—along with James Joyce's *Ulysses* (in David Cowden's seminar The Modern Novel) and a dozen or so other works by Joyce, Henry James, Joseph Conrad, and Virginia Woolf—while plotting my future and preparing for honors exams.

I enjoyed it, exams and all. The highlight was an oral exam on Kant with Lewis White Beck, a leading Kant scholar and translator. As a convergence of inquiring minds and great books, that Kant seminar was the apotheosis of the Honors Program—the unrecorded high point in the history of learning at Swarthmore College. Not of genius, but of learning.

Within the dense labyrinth of the Kantian critiques, I found a compelling way of concerting mind and nature. There are other great ideas in Kant, but above all, he pointed the way toward the modern synthesis of reason and experience as building blocks of knowledge. By the end of that semester, I couldn't exactly sight-read Kant's symphony, but I could at least hum it.

Despite all of this deep thought, an academic career wasn't in my future: I'd failed to persuade myself that philosophy was my calling. So, after a year of writing and research, I enrolled at the London School of Economics (LSE) to study political theory.

Though significantly less rigorous than Swarthmore, the LSE course wasn't bad. The main seminar was led by an icon of conservative British political theory, Michael Oakeshott, a man given to dismissing any statement he disagreed with as "rubbish." (This was a critical posture to which Swarthmore hadn't exposed me.)

In addition to being in London, the LSE had another singular feature that Swarthmore had lacked—a sort of elevator, known as a "paternoster," that had no door and never stopped.

The paternoster, still found across Europe, is the most existential of contraptions. You hop on and off at just the right moment to avoid death or dismemberment. In theory, you could stay on it forever. When your moving platform reaches the top floor, it shifts to the down shaft and begins its descent. At bottom, it shifts again, returning to the top, ad infinitum. Not a bad metaphor for studying philosophy, come to think of it.

The only drawback to studying philosophy has been a certain beclouded incapacity to see the world as it really is. This debility isn't a function of age; I noticed it as soon as I descended from the Olympus of Oberdiek's attic.

Some years after London, and a brief foray into journalism, I became a philosophy graduate student at Columbia. One of the attractions was the legendary Sidney Morgenbesser, who had previously taught at Swarthmore—well before my time. I did well at Columbia but still felt out of place in the world of academe.

My final wake-up call came when I went to see Morgenbesser about a paper that he'd returned with a grade of A-minus but without comment. I stopped by his office hoping to talk it over and maybe learn something. He received me icily, assuming, as I later realized, that I'd come to argue my grade.

Grade grubbing was another thing Swarthmore hadn't prepared me for. I had never discussed a grade with any Swarthmore professor. What was there to discuss? When it dawned on me that Columbia—and most of the academic world—was different, I returned to writing.

I recently taught a course on media and political ideology at New York University and found it challenging and stimulating. But I didn't have the feeling that I'd missed my calling. My father had pronounced scholarship a "saintly profession," but I found this judgment to be unsettling and, at times, quite wide of the mark. And I really wasn't interested in sainthood.

Looking back, the only drawback to studying philosophy has been a certain beclouded incapacity to perceive the world as it really is—apart from the conceptual and normative frameworks that philosophy imbues even in nimbler minds than mine.

This debility isn't a function of age; I noticed it as soon as I descended from the Olympus of Oberdiek's attic. It was probably triggered the moment I opened Tillman's *Introduction to Philosophy* and discovered Descartes' *First Meditation*. We may never glimpse Kant's *"Ding an sich"*; but if you can pump gas without your mind drifting to the question of synthetic a priori truth, you're ahead of me.

Nonetheless, philosophy is an excellent foundation for many careers, including law, politics, business, film theory, bartending, and most kinds of teaching or writing. I've found it indispensable for a species of quasi-academic nonfiction, which is not currently in much demand. But struggling to see things exactly as they are (if they are exactly anything), has its rewards. Hopping on and off the paternoster of pure thought, I may not have done philosophy much good; but it's one way of getting to the next higher level.

New York writer Jeffrey Scheuer '75 is author of The Sound Bite Society: How Television Helps the Right and Hurts the Left *(Routledge, 2001) and* The Big Picture: Why Democracies Need Journalistic Excellence *(Routledge, 2007). For more information on Scheuer, visit his Web site at www.jscheuer.com. See a paternoster in action by finding this article at media.swarthmore.edu/bulletin.*

q + a

Rebel *Energy*

GEORGE LAKEY IS UNSTOPPABLE IN HIS QUEST FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE.

By Carol Brévart-Demm

A couple of hours after Barack Obama had been sworn into office seemed to be a more-than-appropriate time to be interviewing George Lakey, a lifelong activist for peace and conflict resolution and civil rights through nonviolent means. Lakey is currently in his third year as Eugene M. Lang Visiting Professor for Issues of Social Change and Peace and Conflict Studies. "Today is really *quite* a day," he said, beaming.

Lakey, 71, spoke of his father, a former slate miner, who had passed away two days earlier at age 95. During the 1952 presidential campaign, in a moment of wishful thinking, Lakey's father had sparked a fierce argument during lunch with his workmates by expressing regret that Ralph Bunche, undersecretary general to the United Nations and highest African American public official in the country, was not running for president. He would have liked to vote for Bunche.

"He was the only one who took that side," Lakey said. "That was *then,* and this is *now.* My dad was *so* on my mind as I watched the swearing-in this morning."

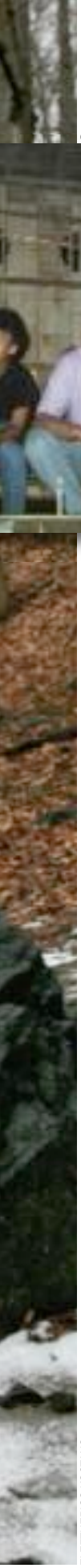
Lakey, a Quaker, was active as a campaigner and organizer in the civil rights movement and the anti-Vietnam War movement. He co-founded the Movement for a New Society, initiated the Philadelphia Jobs With Peace Campaign, and created and organized the Campaign to Stop the B-1 Bomber and Promote Peace Conversion. He founded and served as executive director of Training for Change, a Philadelphia organization that stands up for justice, peace, the environment, and nonviolent change. He has led more than 1,500 training workshops on five continents for groups including homeless people, therapists, prisoners, West Virginia coal miners, Mohawk Indians, lesbians and gays in Russia, and many more.

He is the author of seven books, including *A Manual for Direct Action*—known as the "Bible" of direct action by southern civil rights activists of the 1960s.

In 2008, he received the Martin Luther King Jr. Peace Prize from the Fellowship of Reconciliation. Previously, he was also honored by the Bread and Roses Community Fund with the Paul Robeson Award for Social Justice as well as the national Giraffe Award for "sticking his neck out for the public good."

COURTESY OF GEORGE LAKEY

In 1990, Lakey *(above, third from right)* was smuggled into Burma under the guns of the Burmese dictatorship to assist student freedom fighters, who, although also soldiers, took a course on nonviolent struggle against the dictatorship. Living in the dorm of a "jungle university" that the students had organized within a guerilla encampment in the Burmese jungle, Lakey and his Quaker colleague Michael Beer *(second from right)* received two meals a day and slept on bamboo mats next to a bomb shelter.



ELEFTHERIOS KOSTANS

Which five words best describe you?
Rebel, visionary, curious, warm-hearted

Who is your most-admired political figure?
That would have to be Dr. King or Gandhi. It depends what I need. If I need the American context, it's King; if I need a more cosmopolitan figure, it's Gandhi.

How do you choose your issues?
I ask myself the question, "What does social change need right now?" and tune into the current moment in history to find a need that isn't being met. Then, I ask, "If I jump into that, is there a way that I can make it work with my own personal growth agenda, my own journey toward enlightenment?" And I can always find issues out there that are also here, inside me. It's not hard to find one. I'll never be without an issue.

Have you ever been in a situation, in which, in retrospect, you might have acted differently?
I was once working with an international peacekeeping organization in the mountains of Thailand, training people to enter areas of conflict and function as peacekeepers. It was an extremely dangerous mission, and the participants were anxious about whether they'd survive. But I didn't take their anxiety into account. I took the kinds of chances I'd usually take—I'm a risk taker, that's the nature of my temperament. Even though the participants didn't learn all they should have learned during the training, they became so bonded that their bonding carried them through the assignment.

What are the essential components for effecting nonviolent change?
We have to figure out how to apply the power of nonviolent action to very varied situations. What works in civil rights doesn't necessarily work in national defense. What works for national defense doesn't necessarily apply to terrorism. I believe that a lot of the issues that puzzle us present ripe opportunities for considering how to apply nonviolent action. But it always needs to be done with imagination and humility, rather than a simple-minded transfer of the techniques from one situation to another. We discuss this in the class I'm currently teaching on Nonviolent Responses to Terrorism.

What are your plans for the future?
I'd love to make a dent in the issue of class during the next 20 years or so. For all the strides we've made over the years, especially around race and gender, U.S. culture remains fairly clueless about problems of class. Whether rich, middle class, or poor, everyone is hurt by a class society, but only a few people know what's really hurting them.

How do you enjoy spending leisure time?
I love to play piano for Broadway sing-alongs—in living rooms filled with people singing the golden oldies of Broadway. I also walk in the Crum for exercise with my iPod playing classical music and sometimes folk, jazz, or Broadway songs for company.

Do you have any notable habits?
I take an 18-minute nap every afternoon on my office floor. I'm a vegetarian. As a great-grandfather, I enjoy romping with three little boys, ages 5, 4, and 2. They can romp longer than I can.

How about a favorite book?
There are a bunch, but one that leaps out is *The Lazy Man's Guide to Enlightenment* by Thaddeus Golas—a wonderful book! It basically says you don't have to go to a cave in the Himalayas and starve yourself to find enlightenment. It's also available to the "lazy" man—and, presumably, woman.

What are you currently writing about?
I'm writing a book on Norway as an example of a society that used to have a very harsh class structure—with overriding poverty, and so on—but that has gone way beyond the United States in terms of cleaning that up and addressing class. I've taken research trips to Norway, studying the Norwegians as a kind of convenient, small laboratory to show that people can roll up their sleeves and tackle class.

Have you considered writing an autobiography?
I am writing a memoir, and, although I've always kept journals, I thought I'd start with what's in my head, and then use the journals later. Three years after I started, it's still coming out of my head. My writing coach said that's to be expected. He said, "You may find that the more you excavate, the more becomes available."

Editor's note: To listen to or download a transcription of George Lakey's lecture "Post-election Reflection: Where Do We Go From Here"? visit http://media.swarthmore.edu/faculty_lectures/?cat=76.

ALUMNI WEEKEND
JUNE 5–7

We're saving you a seat!

Classes ending in a "4" or "9" and the Class of 2007 are celebrating reunions, but everyone is invited! Make plans now to return to campus for Alumni Weekend 2009. Find up-to-date information and register on-line at **alumniweekend.swarthmore.edu**

Questions?
E-mail the Alumni Office at **alumni@swarthmore.edu**,
or call (610) 328-8402.

Clockwise from top left:

Amanda Bayer,
Associate Professor of Economics

Benjamin Berger, Assistant
Professor of Political Science

Sibelan Forrester,
Professor of Russian

"HOPE AND COURAGE"

ALUMNI COLLEGE
JUNE 22–25

It's difficult to imagine a better time for Swarthmoreans to gather to discuss hope and courage. Under the leadership of three faculty lecturers, participants in Alumni College 2009 will explore topics in politics, Russian literature, and economics. Outside of class, they will engage in small group discussions of the course topics, hear from current students involved in summer research and community engagement projects, gaze at the stars through the new telescope atop the Science Center, and much more. For alumni with families, high school-aged children are welcome to participate and child care for children from 4 to 14 will be provided. The dormitories are air-conditioned, as are the dining hall and classrooms.

Registration materials—including course descriptions and reading lists—will be mailed in mid-April. Please join your classmates for what promises to be an exciting week on campus!