

# Brooklyn College *Magazine*

Fall 2007

who will  
teach our children?



The School of Education Responds to America's Teacher Crisis

# From Brooklyn College students... to successful citizens of the world



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## EDITOR'S NOTE

*Quick, who are among the hardest working, most undervalued workers in America? Hint: They're the primary transmitters of America's democratic values; their success will determine the country's future place in the world; they are charged with nurturing the minds and spirits of our most precious national asset, our children. That's right—America's teachers.*

*Today, one-third of all teachers leave the profession in their first three years. By five years, half of them have left—troubling statistics, and ones that threaten the nation's future well-being.*

*Experts in the field of teacher training point to several factors driving young, talented teachers out of the profession. Chief among them is a disconnect between public schools and schools of higher education charged with the job of preparing teachers.*

*No school of education in the country is making a more concerted effort to bridge that gap than Brooklyn College's.*

*You can read about the depth and breadth of that effort in this issue.*

*It's another example of how the College is playing a critical role in finding solutions to some of the most persistent problems that Brooklyn, and America, face.*

## Right On, Dr. Gideonse

To the Editor:

As a left-of-center Democrat (from a pro-New Deal home), I probably did not meet a single Republican until I graduated from Brooklyn College. However, while I was a student here, I became friendly with a large number of leftist professors and also had numerous experiences with President Harry Gideonse.

Two are worth sharing. They should help set the record on Dr. Gideonse straight for those who want to celebrate the legacy of *Vanguard*.

First, I took the one course that was personally taught by Dr. Gideonse. On nearly every issue, we clashed to the point that my close friends feared I would be expelled from the class and would suffer disastrous consequences to my career. Approximately a third of the way into the semester, Dr. Gideonse asked if I would stay a few minutes after class to chat with him. He told me that he found our interaction very stimulating to the class and that I was earning a high A grade. He also told me that as long as I backed up my arguments with documented facts and logic, I would continue to score well. At the end of the semester he thanked me for my efforts, which he again emphasized were very useful to him and the class.

Second, some years later, while I was serving in the U.S. Army, I testified in support of several professors who were being terminated from Brooklyn College. I received several notes in appreciation for my testimony and thanking me for my "courage." Among those thanking me for my appearance was Dr. Gideonse.

I recall my friends on *Vanguard* who were very smug in using college funds and resources to promote their political agendas. . . . My memories of *Vanguard* and of my friends from the left give me a greater appreciation for Dr. Gideonse and I believe that he should be evaluated on the basis of his contributions to assuring

the academic and financial strength of Brooklyn College. His contributions are truly the legacy on which I have built an academic and professional career.

Howard Laitin, '52

To the Editor:

I applauded what Dr. Gideonse was doing to keep the campus under control. I'm sure he was as embarrassed as I was at the communist reputation that was being dumped on Brooklyn College because of left-wing weirdos.

I did have one run-in with the administration after I returned from my military sojourn in February 1946. I wanted to re-enter college as a former student who had been off to war. No, the administration insisted. I was to sign up for the G.I. Bill so that Brooklyn College could collect G.I. dollars. I eventually gave in, but it always bothered me.

David Herbach, '46

## Same Ol' Melting Pot, Different Ingredients

To the Editor:

Regarding the article on Coney Island Avenue ["Their Avenue of Dreams," *Brooklyn College Magazine*, Spring 2007], a letter that I sent to *The Nation*, published on December 4, 2006, summarized the state of affairs 60 years ago when I grew up between Newkirk and Foster avenues and went to Public School 217 (graduating class of January 1945) on the corner of Coney Island and Newkirk avenues: "[It] was home to first-generation Americans; [they were] Irish, Italian, German, Polish and East European Jewish. English was the lingua franca among the parental generation, many of whom spoke Gaelic, Italian, German, Polish and Yiddish. The butchers, delicatessen owners, tailors, bakers, barbers, and other storekeepers spoke the same languages. By happenstance, one of my daughters lives in the same neighborhood now. It is Haitian, Yemenite,

Pakistani, Afghan, Turkish, Korean, Japanese, Russian, Israeli, etc. English is the lingua franca, and the parental generation and storekeepers speak their native tongues. My grandson graduated some years ago from the same public school I did in 1945. The 'bilingual' coordinator told me that she coordinated twenty-seven primary languages there! The neighborhood is completely different—and entirely the same! Three cheers for the Tower of Babel.

David C. Garron, '52; M.A., '55

To the Editor:

In his interesting article, "Their Avenue of Dreams," writer Richard M. Sheridan erroneously states that Coney Island Avenue ends at Neptune Avenue. Actually, it continues south beyond Neptune for about three avenue blocks, where it finally comes to an end at the boardwalk. The beach at that point is Brighton Beach, not Coney Island. Coney begins a mile or so west down the boardwalk from where Coney Island Avenue terminates. Unfortunately, the avenue's name causes people unfamiliar with the area to conclude that this thoroughfare leads directly to the beaches and amusement parks of Coney Island.

Claudia Bienenfeld, '03

**Richard M. Sheridan's Reply:** *I apologize for any misunderstanding that I might have caused. I was attempting to describe the main stretch of Coney Island Avenue and the route taken by the B68 bus as it winds southward through Brooklyn neighborhoods from the southern boundary of Prospect Park to the northern border of Brighton Beach, which I understood to be the main area of study for Professor Krase and his associates. To me, a born-and-bred Queens kid, everything south of Neptune Avenue resembles beachfront property—whether it's Coney Island, Brighton Beach, the Rockaways, or the South Shore of Long Island.*

## A Heated Response

To the Editor:

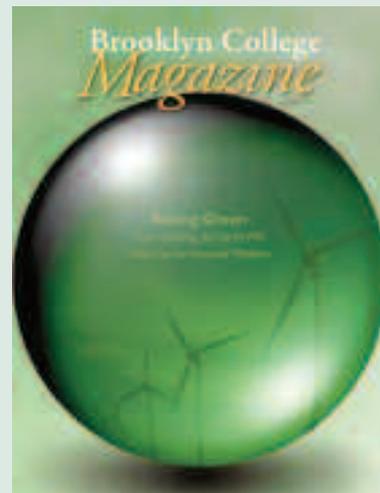
A statement by Professor Robert Bell regarding geothermal energy ("An Interview with Professor Robert Bell," *Brooklyn College Magazine*, Spring 2007) gives a misleading impression. His statement that "the hot rocks have to be close to the surface, and there has to be water closely available" is no longer the case.

Geothermal energy comes in various forms and serves multiple purposes.

First, hot water from shallow aquifers is used directly as a heat source for structures of all sorts. This is done worldwide, and such facilities in the United States effectively offset the use of 2,000 MW of electricity. In this type of use, Professor Bell is partly correct. There does need to be thermal water at a moderate depth (usually not greater than about 1,000 meters).

Secondly, steam or hot water is used to generate electricity via turbine-generators. Worldwide, the total is about 9,000 MW, of which some 2,000 MW are in the United States—a twenty-fold increase since 1973, the year I founded GeothermEx, Inc.

More to the point, the type of geothermal power plant and well-field operating practice also have changed greatly. Geothermal fields do not produce potable water, but rather a mineralized brine. At all geothermal fields, the thermal fluid is injected back into the underground formation ("the reservoir") after heat is extracted. Very little is released to the atmosphere in the form of steam or water vapor, and nothing goes to pollute the ground water. Additionally, the binary cycle heat-exchanging technique, used at a growing number of fields, releases absolutely nothing to either the



atmosphere or the shallow groundwater system. Put another way, the net consumption of the geothermal fluid has been reduced by more than 75 percent from earlier days.

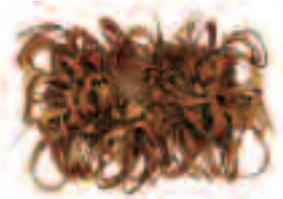
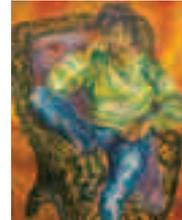
Therefore, the geothermal industry is not a consumer of potable water. Indeed, its net fluid consumption is far lower than for coal, oil, and nuclear power generation, or for the production of ethanol fuel, or oil from tar sands, shale, or coal.

Geothermal fields currently under development in the U.S. will add between 100 MW and 300 MW of electricity generation in the next couple of years. Because 1 MW of electricity (or electricity-equivalent in the case of direct hot-water heating) serves about 800 homes, the present and soon-to-be available geothermal systems provide light and/or hot-water service to some 3 million households nationally.

But that's not all the good news.

Increasingly, homeowners, business executives, and others are discovering the advantages of shallow-source geothermal heat pumps. These, like solar panels, work on a building-by-building basis and provide a steady and dependable source of both home

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## BC's Virtual **Art Museum**



**Potted Plants**, by Joe Loguirato, 40" x 30", acrylic on canvas, 2003

On the walls of the Brooklyn College Library's magnificent second-floor reading room are murals of two of the world's greatest libraries—Egypt's Alexandrian Library and Rome's Augustan Library. The murals, entitled *Famous Libraries of the World*, are the work of Olindo Mario Ricci, who painted them from 1936 to 1939, with funding from the Federal Arts Project. Ricci, who began the murals as a WPA artist and completed them as a Brooklyn College professor, wanted students "to feel as if they are in the company of the greats" as they studied. Now these

important works are available for viewing online, along with sixty others by internationally recognized artists included in the library's art collection.

Diverse in character and international in scope, the collection features works by Elizabeth Murray, William Kentridge, Chakaia Booker, Shahzia Sikander, Sarah Sze, John Walker, Edward Ruscha, and Xu Bing. Several of these artists live and work in Brooklyn's dynamic art community, and all of them have works in major museums around the world. The collection also includes drawings and prints by Alberto Giacometti, Käthe Kollwitz, Alexander Calder, Georges Braque, Robert Motherwell, Chaim Gross, and Joe Loguirato, M.A., '02, who is the art director in the College's Office of Communications.

Most of the art collection was acquired just before the 2002 opening of the expanded library. Many of the purchases were funded by New York City's "Percent for Art" law, which ensures that public spaces are graced with art. Numerous other works were acquired through gifts, and some are on loan.

The new online catalogue displays digital reproductions and brief written descriptions, also available on podcast, that offer insights into the works and the artists. Suggested readings and links to sites that provide contextual information about the work, as well as to museum and gallery exhibitions, are included in the Web page documents.

For onsite viewing, the library is now offering an audio tour of works available to the public. The audio tour presents about twenty selected works, according to Associate Professor Miriam Deutch, the chairperson of the Library Art Acquisition committee. You may access the online art collection at <http://library.brooklyn.cuny.edu/art/index.html>.

Above: artists, from left, Henry Botkin, Anthony G. Gennarelli, David Deutsch, Chaim Gross, Unknown, Chakaia Booker, Cynthia Winings, Seymour Meyer, Asya Dodina and Slava Polishchuk, Harold Baumbach, Robert Motherwell, Elizabeth Murray.



## You Can Go Home(page) Again

Almost six decades after the original *Vanguard* closed, staff members who never quite lost touch with each other have created a Web version, and the publishing comeback has proved invigorating. “It’s a terrific communications link,” says Albert Lasher, ’51. “The website allows everyone to ‘see’ and talk to one another, just the way we used to do in the old *Vanguard* office. In fact, we all suddenly realized, we’re back in business! We’re reporting on our environment, on how it affects us all, on how we see it, and we’re enriching that by including our view of the developments that led up to where we find ourselves today.”

Lasher is not alone in his enthusiasm for the group experience that changed the lives of every student involved with the paper.

About twenty-five alumni now contribute to the online *Vanguard*

([www.brooklyn.cuny.edu/bc/offices/vanguard](http://www.brooklyn.cuny.edu/bc/offices/vanguard)). Three times that number are on the site’s e-mail address list, proof not only of the close following *Vanguard* once inspired in print, but also of its present “virtual print” success.

There is no lack of expertise among the old student staff. Six years ago *Brooklyn College Magazine* recalled *Vanguard’s* heyday in a feature article that ran together with a “Where Are They Now?” insert: Eighteen of the former *Vanguard* staff were listed as top editors and staff writers for major newspapers and magazines around the country. The list also included book-publishing executives, radio and television broadcasters and producers, a staff director for the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, and the CEO of the Consumers Union.

The new version is manned by webmaster Herbert Dorfman, ’51, former news producer for ABC,

NBC, and CBS, and first director of the broadcast journalism program at Brooklyn College. A frequent contributor is Larry Friedman, ’53, former Associated Press reporter, *Life* magazine executive, and aide to New York Governor Mario Cuomo—check out his piece on the early *Vanguard* days, in the “History” section. For a taste of the humor that permeates the site, go to Issue 4 in the new “Quadrangle” section, edited by Larry Eisenberg, ’51, and read his piece “You Can’t Go Rome Again” as well as the piece by the late Norma Liberman Friedman, ’50, on four great excuses for not attending your college reunion.

Soon to be posted is the *Vanguard* blog. Name suggestions from the new staff included “Rearguard” and “En garde,” but they finally settled on “On Guard: The *Vanguard* Blog.”

## Over the Hill? No, **Out of the Box!**

Breathing new life into theater works that have lived a long time is only one part of the equation for the Out of the Box Theatre Company. The other part is allowing actors who have lived a long time to bring the passions and talents gained by long experience to roles they may never have had a chance to play before. The idea is the brainchild of an alumnus of the Brooklyn College M.F.A. program in theater, Scott Robinson, '92, who founded the company and serves as artistic director. Last summer Out of the Box presented its first production—Molière's *The Miser*, set to the music of Mozart. Robinson says that "many of the plays we plan to do are either forgotten or so stereotyped in presentation that they lose much of their character. We want to bring them new life."

But that isn't the company's only goal, according to Robinson. They will also primarily feature actors, directors, and set designers over the age of fifty. "One thing that I thought would make my theater company special," he says, "was if I allowed older actors a chance to revisit roles that maybe now they'd be too old for commercially."

Out of the Box was incorporated in August 2006, and Robinson lined up a number of Brooklyn College alumni to work with him: John Scheffler, the set designer, is the former director of the College's set design program and a professor emeritus of the Theater

Department; Lin Snider, '94, (right) a cast member and vice-president of the theater company, is also a graduate of the M.F.A. program in theater; Peter J. Coriaty, '73, is another cast member; Marge Linney, treasurer of Out of the Box, was director of the graduate program in acting and is also a professor emerita of the Theater Department; and Oscar Award winner F. Murray Abraham, an honorary board member, taught in the Theater Department.

This summer the company will produce a classic temperance play of the nineteenth century, *Ten Nights in a Bar Room*, by T. S. Arthur. The performance will continue the musical tradition begun with *The Miser*, Robinson says, and will "blend the words of the playwright with the music of a recognized composer." And Arthur's sensational classic melodrama, he says, will be staged with "special effects in the *Perils of Pauline* fashion, including vaudevillian olio acts—a type of theater rarely seen in New York City." The company hopes to tap the Brooklyn College Theater Department's costume-design students to help create period clothes for the play.

Out of the Box's innovative treatment of Molière's classic also incorporated the traditional "showboat" melodrama format: both between and during scenes, performers provided musical interludes, or olio acts, as comments on the dramatic action. Robinson describes it as a "musical approach to



a straight play without its becoming a musical comedy."

The group's Equity showcase productions (an arrangement that gives union actors a chance to "showcase" their talents) run at Greenwich Village's Bank Street Theatre, which Robinson, who directed last summer's production, hopes to make his company's regular home.

After graduating from Brooklyn College, Robinson began a career in television commercials. He also served as executive producer and artistic director of the Lake Area Performing Arts Guild in Lake Ozark, Missouri, where he learned all aspects of running a theater company, from fundraising to ticket sales. "It was extremely good training ground for what I'm doing now," he says.

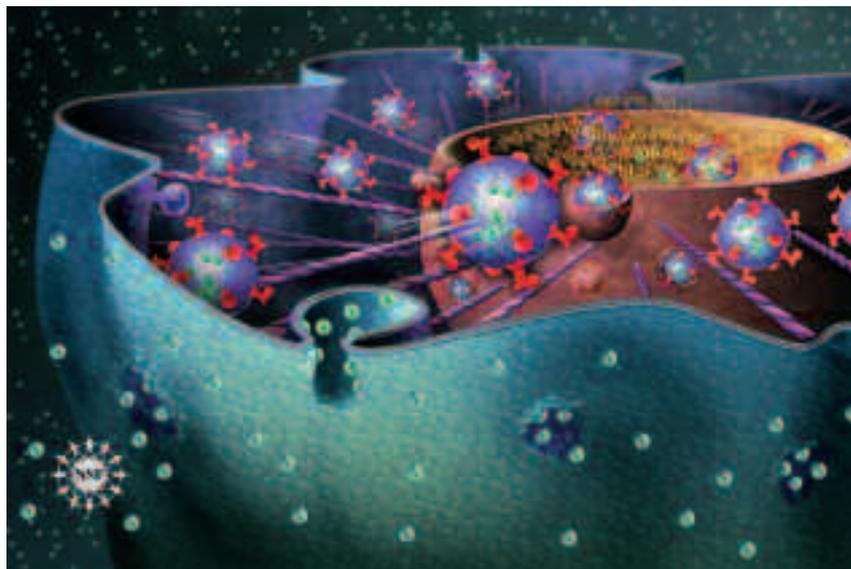
The theater company may be found online at [www.outoftheboxtheatre.com](http://www.outoftheboxtheatre.com). Visitors may download order forms for tickets on the website.

## Cell Gazer, Path Breaker

On August 10, 2007, the National Science Foundation announced that a Brooklyn College research team led by Professor of Biology Ray Gavin shattered the long-held belief that no direct pathway exists between material outside a cell and the cell nucleus.

The findings of the NSF-funded breakthrough research study have been published in “Cell Motility and the Cytoskeleton,” and will be key in understanding more completely the function of the cell—nature’s smallest metabolically functional unit of life.

Eve Barak, an NSF program director, hailed Gavin’s discovery as “an amazing and potentially paradigm-changing observation,” and predicts that it “will have an enormous impact on how scientists think about how cellular functions are regulated.”



Credit: Nicolle Rager Fuller, National Science Foundation

Gavin reports that the discovery of the pathways in the one-celled protozoan *Tetrahymena thermophila* originated with an observation he made about ten years ago while simply watching cells through a microscope. “I am a patient and constant observer of living things,” he says. “And I watch them all the time with no agenda in mind. Some people are window gazers. They

stand in front of the window and just look. I do the same with cells.”

As a result of Gavin’s work, biologists may now study the kinds of external molecules that can gain entry to the nucleus through these newly defined pathways and how these materials influence the nucleic material and its processes.

## Fulbright Fellow

Professor Robert D. (KC) Johnson, of the Brooklyn College History Department, was one of ten faculty members from the City University of New York chosen as 2007–2008 Fulbright fellows, enabling them to participate in the U.S. government’s flagship international exchange program.

The grants, based on academic merit and leadership potential, send selected scholars abroad to engage in a variety of educational activities, primarily university lecturing, advanced research, graduate study, and teaching in elementary and secondary schools.

Johnson, who joined the Brooklyn College faculty in 1999 after earning his bachelor’s degree from Harvard University in 1988, his master’s from the University of Chicago in 1989, and his Ph.D. from Harvard in 1993, holds the Fulbright Distinguished Chair in the Humanities at Tel Aviv University.

## For Sale: Dracula's Castle

Since he graduated from Brooklyn College in 1961 with a bachelor's degree in economics, Michael Gardner has led an exciting and rewarding life. A former naval officer, he currently is the CEO and chairman of the

Manhattan-based Baytree Capital investment firm, which so far has raised more than \$1 billion on behalf of small to midsize public companies. Also, in a secondary career as a theatrical producer in New York, London, and Las Vegas, he has lent his skills to such works as *A Year in the Life of Frog and Toad*, for which he received a Tony Award nomination in 2003.

In all things, he says, he has tried to follow the principle that "life is supposed to be fun." Among the projects to which this philosophy has led him is the sale of the centuries-old fortification known as Dracula's Castle. "This is not a real estate deal," he explains. "I'm not a real estate broker."

Perched atop a rugged peak in Romania's mountainous Transylvania region, the fortress—officially named Bran Castle—has a long and tumultuous history. Built in the thirteenth century to keep out invading Turks, it is said to have briefly sheltered one of Romania's national heroes, Vlad III, also known as Vlad the Impaler because of his liking for skewering captured foes on long wooden stakes.

In the late nineteenth century, Irish horror writer Bram Stoker based his fictional character Count Dracula (the Romanian name translates either as "son of the Dragon" or sometimes "son of the Devil") on Vlad, and modeled the vampire's lair on Bran Castle. In 1920 the old castle became home to Romania's ruling family, who lived there until after World War II when the Communists took over Romania and kicked the family out, turning their castle into a museum.

Among those displaced was then ten-year-old Archduke Dominic von Habsburg. Now an architect living



in upstate New York, Habsburg in summer 2006 regained title to Bran Castle, which sits on twenty-two acres of land. At the time, he agreed to keep the museum open until 2009. Nearly half a million vampire fans annually trek to the site, which in guidebooks and tour bus brochures all around the world is billed as "Dracula's Castle."

Habsburg offered to sell Bran Castle back to the government, but officials declined. He then sought another buyer, turning to Michael Gardner for his expertise in working out a development plan.

After taking the Habsburgs on as clients, Gardner said "they're looking to flat out sell the entire project, but they are particular about who they sell it to." He also noted that "while they are amenable to someone building a resort that continues the castle and such, they are not amenable to blood dripping on swords. This is not going to be Vampire Land."

Since then, a faction of Romanian politicians in one of the two houses of the parliament has sought to overturn the castle's transfer to Habsburg's control, citing "improper procedures." Says Gardner, "This has placed a shadow over the project." However, he adds, "we're working to make the local people and their representatives in government see how development will make things so much better for them. The museum is not going to close."

He says he hopes that requests for bids on the property can be put out in spring 2008.

"Romania is a beautiful travel destination, and Bran Castle is one of its top places to visit," Gardner says.

## Eureka! Steinbeck Literary Trove Unearthed

As a kid growing up in a tight-knit Jewish family in Brooklyn's Sheepshead Bay neighborhood, Joel Eisenberg liked to collect baseball cards, comic books, and other such boyhood things. When he wasn't collecting, he was dreaming about becoming a scriptwriter or filmmaker in Hollywood.

But the young Eisenberg also recognized that the odds were against his making a go of such a risky career. So later, as a member of the Brooklyn College Class of 1985, he earned a bachelor's degree in special education before packing up and heading west to try his luck in Los Angeles.

"I thought I might need a fall-back career just in case I got to California and couldn't make it as a writer or filmmaker," Eisenberg, forty-three, recalled recently from his San Fernando Valley home, northwest of Los Angeles.

As it happened, luck was on Eisenberg's side. Over the past couple of decades, he has done very well at his dream career. He has written screenplays, books, and articles, and heads his own company, Eisenberg Media Group.

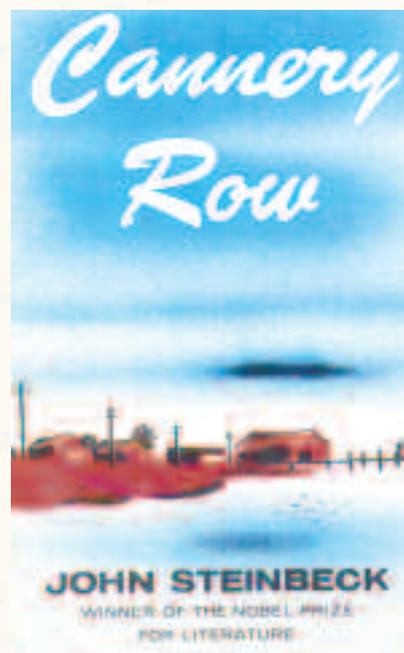
Over the years, he also has made a lot of friends in and out of the entertainment industry. One of them was the late theatrical producer Ernest Martin. "Ernie was like my California grandfather," says Eisenberg.

Sometime after Martin's death, Eisenberg went to his home to interview the older man's widow for a book he was writing, *Aunt Bessie's How to Survive a Day Job While Pursuing the Creative Life*. When the interview was over, she mentioned that she was going through her husband's belongings and asked Eisenberg to sort through an old box of papers that had been stored in a closet for nearly a half-century.

"I guess she knew from Ernie that I was something of a collector," he says. "Anyway, I agreed to help her."

Inside the dusty box, hidden under an old brown and crumbling copy of the *L.A. Times*, Eisenberg uncovered a trove of previously unseen works by Nobel Prize-winning American writer John Steinbeck. "This stuff was unbelievable, just lying in a box," he says. "I had this 'Aha!' moment when I realized not only what I had here, but what I had the responsibility to do."

It took Eisenberg almost a year to go through the jumble of papers and put it in order. The hoard included a 188-page manuscript of *Sweet Thursday*, the sequel to Steinbeck's highly acclaimed *Cannery Row*; the unfinished draft of a musical comedy called *The Bear Flag Café*; a manuscript of another book, *The Log from the Sea of Cortez*; carbon copies of thirteen letters dealing with *Sweet Thursday* dating from 1953; and an unpublished story set during the McCarthy era, "If This Be Treason."



Earlier this year the whole collection went on the auction block. The manuscript for *Sea of Cortez* and other papers brought in roughly \$100,000, but no buyer met the \$300,000 reserve price for the *Sweet Thursday* material, which went unsold.

The outcome of the auction was disappointing, admits Eisenberg, who earned a share of the profits for his efforts. However, he says, he comforts himself with the knowledge that he has touched and helped preserve history. "I truly feel I made a difference in saving important literature."

## Goodbye, Ms. Chips

In spring 2007, the papers of Professor Emerita of History Madeline Robinton, 1909–2006, were made available to the public by the Brooklyn College Archives and Special Collection Division. Of interest to any who encountered her during her forty-five years in the classroom, the catalogued documents are also of great value to those who wonder what turns a student into a fine teacher; not to mention those studying the history of Brooklyn and Brooklyn College.

When Madeline Robinton retired from the College in 1976, she had seen it through its entire evolution up to that point, from a time when separate political science, sociology, economics, and history departments did not

exist, from the Willoughby and Lawrence Street buildings to the Midwood campus.

Robinton's legacy lies not in her publications, nor in her intense involvement with the national professional societies of academe so much as in her contributions to the Brooklyn College History Department curriculum, her compilation of the primary source books for History 1 and 2, and—perhaps most importantly—her effect upon students.

In letters collected as part of the College's May 1976 farewell tribute, scores of past pupils wrote in praise of the radiantly attractive teacher who conducted herself with uncompromising personal integrity. Her admirers wished Professor Robinton well while expressing regret at the loss that her retirement represented. In their words, here's how her example carries on.

*“...the course in modern history, I took in her first year teaching. I recall vividly...the immense earnestness with which the young teacher asked her questions. ...The solicitude she showed for her students...established a warm personal relationship with them that endured long after they left the classroom. And that initial impression of earnest inquiry was a permanent reminder of the meaning of historical scholarship.”*

— Oscar Handlin, '34,  
Emeritus Professor of  
History, Harvard  
University; Pulitzer  
Prize-winning author of  
*The Uprooted* (1952)

*[To Professor Robinton:] “...you taught me a great deal—that teaching must be fun (you so obviously enjoyed it)...that warmth and familiarity did not mean favoritism or the relaxation of standards...”*

— John A. Garraty, '41,  
Gouverneur Morris  
Professor Emeritus of  
History, Columbia  
University; General  
Editor, *American National  
Biography*; Former  
President, Society of  
American Historians

*“Like everyone else I have forgotten most of what I learned in college. But I seem to own a store of odd, bright bits of strangely significant knowledge, almost all of which I can trace back to Professor Robinton's English History classes...the humane vividness of her class was to us the reading of history for life.”*

— Eva Brann, '50, Tutor,  
Saint John's College;  
Recipient of the Brooklyn  
College Presidential  
Medal, 2007



*Madeline Robinton is just one of the distinguished faculty members whose collections are housed in the Brooklyn College Library's Archives and Special Collections Division, which includes the papers of Alfred McClung Lee, Belle Zeller, and Harry Slochower. For more information on donating Brooklyn College materials to the archives, contact Professor Anthony Cucchiara, associate librarian for information services and distinctive collections, [tonyc@brooklyn.cuny.edu](mailto:tonyc@brooklyn.cuny.edu).*

*"She treated her students with dignity, honesty, and respect that demanded the same in return...A serious student 'had to' work with Madeline Robinton because she offered a type of training in history which almost no one else did...the novel idea that history was written by people, not automatons..."*

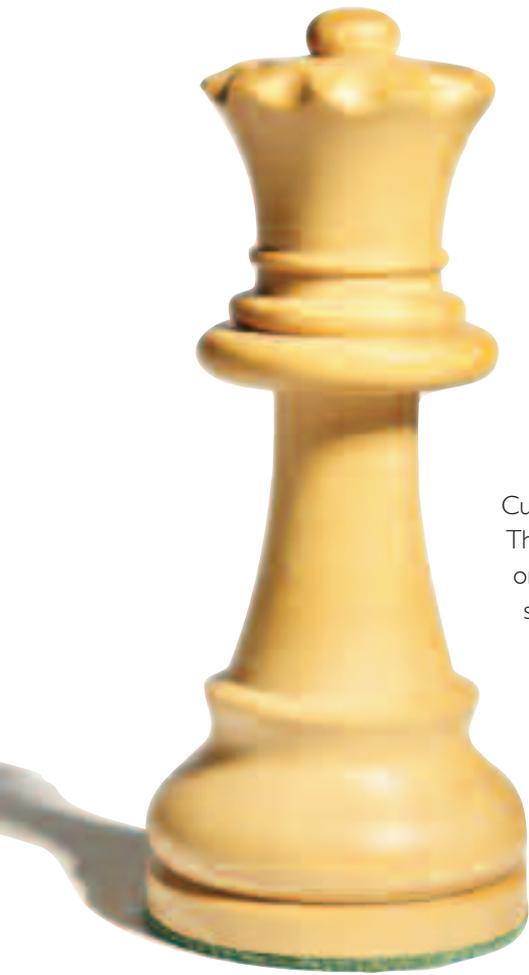
— Charles J. Halperin, '67,  
Researcher, Russian and  
European Institute,  
Indiana University,  
Bloomington

*[To Professor Robinton:] "...you were an awesome figure to me. Not in an authoritarian way...I marveled at your erudition and your sophistication...You never talked down to us, although heaven knows, you often had justification to do so."*

— Myron Kandel, '52,  
President, Initiative for  
Corporate Governance  
and Investor Protection  
(New Hampshire);  
Founding Financial  
Editor, CNN Business  
News; former sports  
editor, *Vanguard*, a  
Brooklyn College student  
newspaper

*"Her course...taught me that one cannot comprehend the logic of the law without understanding the political, economic, and social forces that shaped the society...I have been able to spot a 'Robinton historian' in my law classes. When we compared notes, we agreed that her course was among the most important in preparing us for our law careers."*

— Alan Dershowitz, '59,  
Felix Frankfurter  
Professor of Law, Harvard  
Law School



## Check, Mate

Brooklyn College alumnus Gata Kamsky, '99, won the prestigious 2007 Chess World Cup in Khanty-Mansiysk, Russia, in a spectacular victory over Alexei Shirov, catapulting the Russian-born Kamsky to the game's international elite.

Kamsky's victory earned him \$120,000 in prize money and the opportunity to challenge 2005 world champion Veselin Topalov of Bulgaria. If Kamsky wins that match, he will take on the 2008 World Chess Champion for the 2009 title.

Kamsky, thirty-four, registered no losses on his way to winning the World Cup, beating Ahmed Adly, Boris Avrukh, and Kiril Georgiev in his first three matches. Then he drew his two-game mini-match against the Russian Peter Svidler before going on to defeat Ruslan Ponomarev and Magnus Carlsen in the quarterfinals and semifinals, respectively.

In the closely fought four-game World Cup final, Kamsky and Shirov drew the first game. Kamsky won the second game. The third was a draw and so was the fourth, which ended after thirty-four moves.

Kamsky, a Brighton Beach resident, retired from chess in 1996, after losing to Anatoly Karpov in the World Chess Championship twenty-match contest fought in Elista, Russia. In 1999 he returned, playing in the Knockout World Championship in Las Vegas, but again lost, this time to Alexander Khalifman. Five years later he finished in a tie for first place in the New York Masters.

After graduating from Brooklyn College, Kamsky entered medical school but dropped out after a year. He then switched to law school and graduated from Touro College Law Center in 2004.

## M.F.A. Program **Writers Honored**

The English Department's M.F.A. program, recently named one of the top five "Up-and-Coming Programs" in the country by *The Atlantic Monthly*, keeps turning out attention-grabbing writers. The play is the thing for Thomas Bradshaw, an adjunct professor of playwriting at Brooklyn College and an alumnus of the English Department's M.F.A. playwriting program. His latest work, titled *Dawn*, was recently selected to be read at the New York Theater Workshop on East Fourth Street in Manhattan.

*Dawn* is the story of a father's redemption and reconciliation after

having led a life scarred by alcoholism, which has left him totally estranged from his family. While on the road to recovery, he finds God and is confronted with dark revelations that combine to destroy the world he once knew.

This is not the African-American writer's first encounter with public notice. He previously wowed downtown audiences with other politically incorrect works such as *Pure*, about a scholar with a cocaine habit who fantasizes about being a plantation owner whipping his black slaves. Another of his works is titled *Strom Thurmond Is Not a Racist*.

Another graduate of the M.F.A. program, Thomas Grattan, was chosen as the winner of the *Colorado Review's* Nelligan Prize for Short Fiction. The story, titled "I Am a Souvenir," will be appearing in the fall issue of the *Colorado Review*.

Still a resident of Brooklyn, Grattan was also a finalist for the *Iowa Review* Fiction Award and a recipient of Brooklyn College's Lainoff Prize for fiction. Grattan recently read selections from his work at a publication party for *Brooklyn Review*, Number 23, in the East Village.

# Eric Alterman: A Sharp Wit Plus a Sharp Pen Make for a “Distinguished” Career

Eric Alterman, journalist, author, political blogger, and professor of journalism in the Brooklyn College English Department, has been named a distinguished professor of English by the trustees of the City University of New York.

A native of Bayside, Queens, Alterman, forty-eight, received a B.A. in history and government from Cornell University, an M.A. in international relations from Yale University, and a Ph.D. in U.S. history from Stanford University.

Alterman launched his journalism career covering politics for *Rolling Stone*, *Mother Jones*, the *Nation*, *Elle*, and the *Sunday Express* in London, as well as freelancing for the *New York Times*, the *New York Post*, *Vanity Fair*, *Harper's*, and other publications. In 1992 he published his first book, *Sound and Fury: The Making of the Punditocracy*. The book was well received and led to appearances on the *Today Show*, the *Tonight Show* and *Nightline*.

In 1996, Alterman was hired as a commentator by the MSNBC cable channel. In 2002 MSNBC asked him to write a daily weblog, which he titled “Altercation.”

Alterman and MSNBC parted ways in 2006, and his weblog was picked up by Media Matters for America, a liberal website devoted to debunking conservative “misinformation.”

Alterman himself is both revered and hated, depending on the political viewpoint of the observer. Staunch conservatives find him detestable. But he has also feuded with some who wear the liberal label. Among those is Ralph Nader, who Alterman criticizes

for the activist’s actions in the 2000 U.S. presidential election, arguing that Nader is partially to blame for the election of George W. Bush because of vote splitting.

Before 2000, Alterman says, he “had the same high opinion of Ralph Nader that most liberals shared. I’ve revised my opinion of the pre-2000 Nader downward.”

Alterman has his supporters. He has been called “the most honest and incisive media critic writing today” by the *National Catholic Reporter*. And the *San Francisco Chronicle* has referred to him as the author of “the smartest and funniest political journal out there.”

English Department Chairperson Ellen Tremper describes him simply as “one of the very few public intellectuals in America under the age of sixty who is just as comfortable in the university as in the newsroom, as well as in most places in between.”

Alterman describes his experience at Brooklyn College thus far as “wonderful” and praises the industry and dedication of the students here. “So many of them have to juggle so many aspects of their lives—study, work, family life,” he says. “I really admire how they hold it all together.”

Before joining the faculty of Brooklyn College, he served as an adjunct professor of journalism at New York University and at Columbia. He continues to serve as a senior fellow of the World Policy Institute at the New School. His recent elevation to distinguished professor has been “a particular honor,” he says. “Universities are generally not so welcoming of



journalists. In the past, I have often thought of my two careers—education and journalism—as being divided. Now, as a distinguished professor, I feel that my two halves have been unified.”

Besides his academic pursuits, he is a media columnist for the *Nation*. The busy professor is also a senior fellow at the Center for American Progress, where he writes and edits the “Think Again” column, and is a history consultant to HBO Films.

Professor Alterman is the best-selling author of a half-dozen books, the latest being *When Presidents Lie: A History of Official Deception and Its Consequences* (2004). This book caused former Nixon White House attorney John Dean to opine: “I’ve never read a better explanation of why presidents lie.”

His latest book, titled *Why We’re Liberals: A Political Handbook for Post-Bush America*, is scheduled to hit bookstore shelves on March 17.



Ebbets Field, ca. 1913, Merlis Collection, brooklynpix.com.

# Fifty Years? Say It Ain't So!

Ron Schweiger, '70,  
Remembers Brooklyn's  
Beloved Bums

by Robert E. Murphy

This past October marked a hard-to-believe half century since the Boys of Summer abandoned their legendary ballpark on Bedford Avenue thirty blocks north of Brooklyn College and high-tailed it for a sunny canyon in Tinseltown.

In the chilly Brooklyn spring of 1957, an alarmed group of Brooklyn baseball fans known as the "Keep the Dodgers in Brooklyn Committee," led by sporting-goods merchant Henry Modell, set out to collect one million signatures in support of their cause. Of the first 25,000 signatures they recorded, 3,500 were inscribed by students at Brooklyn College. No doubt one or more persons reading this was on that list.

Ron Schweiger was only twelve years old then, his Brooklyn College days—or nights—several years ahead of him. (He was, like Borough President Marty Markowitz, a 1970 night-school graduate.) But his memories of the great 1950s Dodgers cavorting at Ebbets Field are nonetheless vivid. And last year, when a producer from Home Box Office called Borough Hall looking for someone to share such memories for a major feature on the late, lamented team, Schweiger, the official Brooklyn borough historian and an Alumni Association board member, stepped up to represent all BC students and all of Brooklyn.

As a kid, Schweiger was passionate about rooting for the Brooklyn Dodgers and about playing the game, as well. He was, he is pleased to recall, a "pretty fast" Little League outfielder.

"My batting-stance was Jackie Robinson's," he says. He learned to be a switch-hitter by imitating Duke Snider, the Dodgers' left-handed, slugging center-fielder.

Schweiger saw these heroes in person for the first time at age seven in 1952 when his father, also a sometime ballplayer, known as "Yip," treated him to a box-seat behind homeplate at Ebbets Field. In later years he would often sit in the upper deck with his older brother and several friends from their block in Gravesend. His mother supplied them with chopped-liver sandwiches, made with matzohs if it was Passover. He estimates that he visited Ebbets Field about twenty or thirty times.

After the games, Schweiger and his friends would wait for the players where their cars were parked, in a Mobil station beyond the tall right-field wall. He can still see in his mind's eye Roy Campanella's gold Cadillac and Jackie's "big black Buick."

"When I met Rachel Robinson," he says, "I told her that Jackie didn't leave until everybody got an autograph. She nodded to me and said, 'Yes, Jack never wanted to disappoint the kids.'"

Robinson's retirement—after being traded to the Giants!—before that final Brooklyn season fifty years ago, seems in retrospect like a harbinger of doom. And Schweiger remembers well the fans' growing anxiety, as the schedule waned, over losing the Dodgers.

"When the '57 season was well under way," he says, "we became extremely aware that nothing had been settled yet with the Dodgers getting a new ballpark. The rumors became very much real, and we thought, hey, this could really happen!"

And if it did, the consequences might be more devastating for Ron Schweiger than for the average Dodger fan. "Going to sleep at night during the season," he recalls, "I would dream of playing left field for the Dodgers and leaping up to make a game-saving catch against the wall."

On October 8, when the team tersely announced, with principal owner Walter O'Malley nowhere in sight, that they were westward-bound, Schweiger thought to himself, "I knew this was going to happen."

Ironically, during the week that Schweiger was remembering these things, "The O'Malley," as the self-aggrandizing owner of the Dodgers called himself, was elected to the Baseball Hall of Fame. The intervening years have mellowed Schweiger and allowed him to gain



*Home alone: Ron Schweiger with Ebbets Field's home plate, now a permanent part of the College's archives.*

some perspective on what he and millions of Brooklynites first saw as an act of unparalleled treachery. "I don't begrudge him being elected," Schweiger says. "What he did was very innovative. It really was experimental. And his hiring of Jackie Robinson can't be overlooked. As an adult and as a historian—not when I was a kid, of course—I see that, in a business sense, it was the best move O'Malley could have made. He opened up baseball to the rest of the U.S."

Well, maybe Ron Schweiger's willingness to forgive the "Gaelic Machiavel," as Arthur Daley of the *New York Times* called him, is admirable, as was his determination fifty years ago never to root for the Los Angeles Dodgers, and is his current affection for the Mets' New York-Penn League team, the Brooklyn Cyclones.

But what about his expressed hope, though he is a Mets' fan, that those Angelenos will take on the Yankees in the next World Series, and vanquish them, under the guidance of Brooklyn's own Joe Torre? That may be taking forgiveness one step too far. ■

*Robert E. Murphy is a freelance writer and a lifelong resident of Brooklyn. His book on the circumstances surrounding the Brooklyn Dodgers' and the New York Giants' leaving New York in 1957, tentatively titled *After Many a Summer*, will be published next fall.*

brooklyn style



brooklyn style

# No Child Left Behind—

# Brooklyn style

*With 80 percent of full-time faculty working in Brooklyn's public schools, the School of Education is finding new and creative approaches to teaching—and to developing the next generation of teachers.*

by Jamilah Evelyn

On a crisp fall morning, Haroon Kharem, an assistant professor in the School of Education, paces the honey-colored wooden floors in a small classroom at the Performing Arts and Technology High School in Brooklyn's East New York neighborhood. He is encircled by a group of roughly twenty students who simply can't understand how slaves ate pig intestines, commonly known as chitterlings.

"You all say 'ewwww' but they kept your ancestors alive," explains Kharem, a bald and towering professor in tinted eyeglasses, blue jeans, black button-up shirt, and Adidas sneakers.

One student says he'd rather starve. "It's easy to say that, but these people were trying to survive," Kharem shoots back.

In a discussion that ranges from slavery to abused women to welfare, there are no easy answers. What's most important to Kharem—an East New York native who went from running with street gangs in his youth to earning a Ph.D. in curriculum and instruction at Penn State—is that the questions keep coming. "They want to learn, but they also want to be heard," says Kharem after class. "I want to keep pressing them."

Kharem's dogged commitment is emblematic of the larger culture in Brooklyn College's School of Education,





*Deborah Shanley, dean of the School of Education, leads the school's efforts to find alternative ways to prepare the next generation of teachers in full partnership with public schools and community organizations.*

which emphasizes real dirt-under-the-fingernails community engagement and, if not rocket science renovations in the area of pedagogy, certainly new and creative approaches to teaching. But most important, say many professors and the dean, is that they always remember that their greatest asset is the rich and textured laboratory that is Brooklyn and its schools—with all the diversity, the hope, and the enormous challenge.

“What makes us unique is that we are in Brooklyn and we get a taste of so many different kinds of scenarios,” says Peter Taubman, an associate professor of adolescent education. Dean Deborah Shanley says that about 80 percent of full-time faculty members in the School of Education have some kind of connection with Brooklyn public schools, whether they are teaching a course, conducting research, doing professional development with teachers, or are involved with one of the many College programs. Along with the performing arts school in East New York, known as PATHS, the School of Education has established formal and informal associations with a sizable number of Brooklyn’s public schools. The philosophy

behind it is simple: “We can’t really make an impact unless we are where the action is,” says Wayne A. Reed, assistant professor of childhood education.

Their efforts have produced some impressive results. Many of the schools with which the College has established relationships have attendance and graduation rates above 90 percent, while national graduation rates at urban public schools hover at 50 percent. The College’s Science, Technology, and Research (STAR) Early College High School graduated 96 percent of its first class last spring. (See box, page 20) What’s more, officials at the schools say many of the benefits of forging these kinds of collaborations with the School of Education don’t show up in commonly measured statistics.

“Kharem’s class is the carrot for students to step up and be counted as serious learners,” says Lottie Almonte, the principal at PATHS, where 70 percent of students are considered below proficient for their grade level and 77 percent qualify for free or reduced-price lunch. “They think about their work in a different way. They refer to themselves as researchers.”

*School of Education Assistant Professor Haroon Kharem, second from left, teaches a class twice a week at Performing Arts and Technology High School. He exemplifies the commitment of the College's faculty to Brooklyn's public schools.*



When Shanley left her position as dean of the School of Liberal Arts and Education at Medgar Evers College ten years ago to become the dean at Brooklyn College, she says she saw forging more of these kinds of affiliations as a priority.

"One of my first goals was to create a deeper partnership with the schools in Brooklyn and to think about those partnerships in new ways," she says.

She figured one of the easiest ways to accomplish that would be to hire professors who were already inclined to community involvement. She says she also knew it was important to diversify the faculty.

"I think there were two Latinos when I got here, and that was the extent of our diversity," she says. "At one of our first meetings after I became dean, I told them to take a look around this room because it's not going to remain the same."

She recruited from historically black colleges and universities and became conscious of including people of color in many of the school's publications and other print work. "Everything from *Chalkboard*, the School of Education's newsletter, to our holiday cards," she says,

noting that some of the hires since her tenure include about a half-dozen African American professors and ones from Lebanon, Greece, and South Korea.

The ultimate goal, she says, is to create a faculty wholly committed to turning out innovative and resourceful teachers, both inside and outside the classroom. "Ones who are able to work with families, who know how to tap into the city's vast resources, who know how to reach out to community groups," says Shanley. "We don't want students who make excuses about a kid's parents not being involved. Find a sibling. I want our students coming out of here having the ability to exhaust the possibilities."

In one widely heralded example of the kind of inventive students the College has produced, graduate student Georgina Smith started a tutoring service at neighborhood laundromats when she noticed the number of idle kids waiting with their parents for their laundry to be finished. What started out as an experiment at one Eastern Parkway Clean Rite turned into a program that, thanks to a \$12,000 grant from the laundromat's parent company, has expanded across Brooklyn.

In order to mold such students, many of the School of Education professors lead by example. Reed, for instance, last year piloted a course at another East New York school that brings members of the community into the school to teach.

"In the last four or five years these projects have developed a life of their own, so it has become easy for more and more faculty members to plug into what's going on," says Reed.

Many of the collaborations, like Reed's and the one at PATHS, have come about organically: A professor knew an assistant principal, and they got together and made it happen.

Other affiliations, like the one with Brooklyn College Academy, are more formal. BCA is an early college high school, part of a national movement of schools that encourage students to earn an associate degree or two years worth of college credit by the time they finish high school. BCA has six hundred students in grades seven through twelve split up on two campuses—one for grades seven through ten, is on Coney Island Avenue. The other, for grades eleven and twelve, is in Brooklyn College's James Hall.

"When we were founded, the idea was to put kids on a college campus and allow them to take a few college courses," explains Nicholas J. Mazzarella, the academy's principal.

Currently, about 125 BCA students are taking Brooklyn College courses. Last year the school received some grant money from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to formally become an early college high school. Prior to the fall 2007 semester, BCA was a middle college, essentially the same as an early college high school but students typically graduate with fewer college credits. The underlying notion is that students who are underserved by higher education are well served by exposure to a college environment and that creating tighter links between schools and colleges will help to ease the transition for students.

Because of affiliation with the School of Education, "there are all these connections we have that other schools don't," says Mazzarella, who reports to Shanley and also sits on a number of committees in the School of Education.

He credits the synergy the relationship has created with a lot of the school's success. Last year, BCA had a 90 percent attendance rate and a 95.5 percent graduation rate, and its seniors received \$800,000 in scholarship money.

The statistics are similar to those at the Bushwick School for Social Justice, another partner of the School of Education, which, like PATHS, is one of forty-two former large schools the city has broken up into several small ones.



*STAR's first graduation ceremony, 2007.*

## STARs Over Brooklyn

Last June, seventy-one of the original class of seventy-four students who entered Brooklyn College's Science, Technology and Research Early College High School in fall 2003 stepped to the stage at the College's Gershwin Hall to receive their diplomas.

At a time when the graduation rate for public high school students in New York City and other urban areas is around 50 percent, STAR's 96 percent rate stands out as a testament to the effectiveness of what started four years ago as an experiment.

STAR was one of seventy early college high schools funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation in 2003. Dismayed that only two of every ten high-school graduates in the country went on to earn a college degree, the foundation decided to

Taubman explains that two former students, one of whom was teaching in the New York City public school system, approached him five years ago and said they wanted to propose a new school. They asked if he could get the School of Education to be a lead partner, which they would need to qualify for the city program. Taubman got the green light and the two Brooklyn College alumni set about turning on its head a school that formerly maintained a 20 percent graduation rate: Some 85 percent of its first class of seniors graduated last June.

The smaller size definitely helped a lot, says Taubman, but he gives equal credit to the out-of-the-box curriculum the former students designed. Students and parents are included on the planning of the curriculum and often their voices are given equal weight to those of administrators and faculty members. There's one class during the day designed strictly for students and teachers to get to know each other better. For one project, the school's predominantly Latino students counted the trash cans on their own Bushwick streets and those on the Upper East Side of Manhattan. Realizing the huge disparity, they contacted the city's sanitation department to request additional trash cans for Bushwick. Taubman says those trash cans have not yet been forthcoming. Still, "the point is to get them thinking about these kinds of things," he says.

fund the schools in the hope that they would help students underserved by higher education. Today there are 17,000 students at 130 early college high schools across the country.

Located at the historic Erasmus Hall High School in Flatbush, Brooklyn, STAR is the result of a collaboration between Brooklyn College and the Gateway Institute. STAR students take college courses in addition to their regular secondary curriculum. All of the seventy-one graduates have been accepted to college. Some have earned enough credits to bypass a whole year of college. Together, they earned more than \$200,000 in scholarships to attend colleges and universities that include Cornell, Dartmouth, Carnegie Mellon, and St. John's universities as well as Brooklyn College and other CUNY institutions

It's a sentiment that is echoed by Kharem. "So many of these kids have been taught to just receive," he says. "It's about pushing their thinking."

Kharem, who teaches at PATHS two days a week and also brings his students from the high school with him to tutor at a nearby elementary school where he teaches, says he's trying to create students who shake up the status quo.

Last year, he took nine of his PATHS students with him to Chicago for the annual conference of the American Educational Research Association, where he encouraged them to challenge the scholars. One student quizzed a panelist on why students like himself were often labeled "at-risk"; another asked if any of the researchers had any questions for them, while they were there.

"He teaches us things that we don't learn in our textbook," says PATHS student Elizabeth Miranda. "He makes us really think."

Principal Almonte says she's extremely grateful for all the effort from Kharem and others from Brooklyn College. Two to three School of Education professors teach at PATHS every year. Additionally this year, Laurie Rubel, assistant professor of adolescent mathematics education, will start doing some professional development with PATHS math teachers because Almonte says the school is weakest in its math scores. Another School of Education professor, Alma Rubal-Lopez, will teach a course for Hispanic female students on self-confidence and pride.

Almonte says she's sure all the help has played a role in the school's success. Approximately 82 percent of seniors are on track to be part of the first graduating class this spring, and the school has a 92 percent attendance rate.

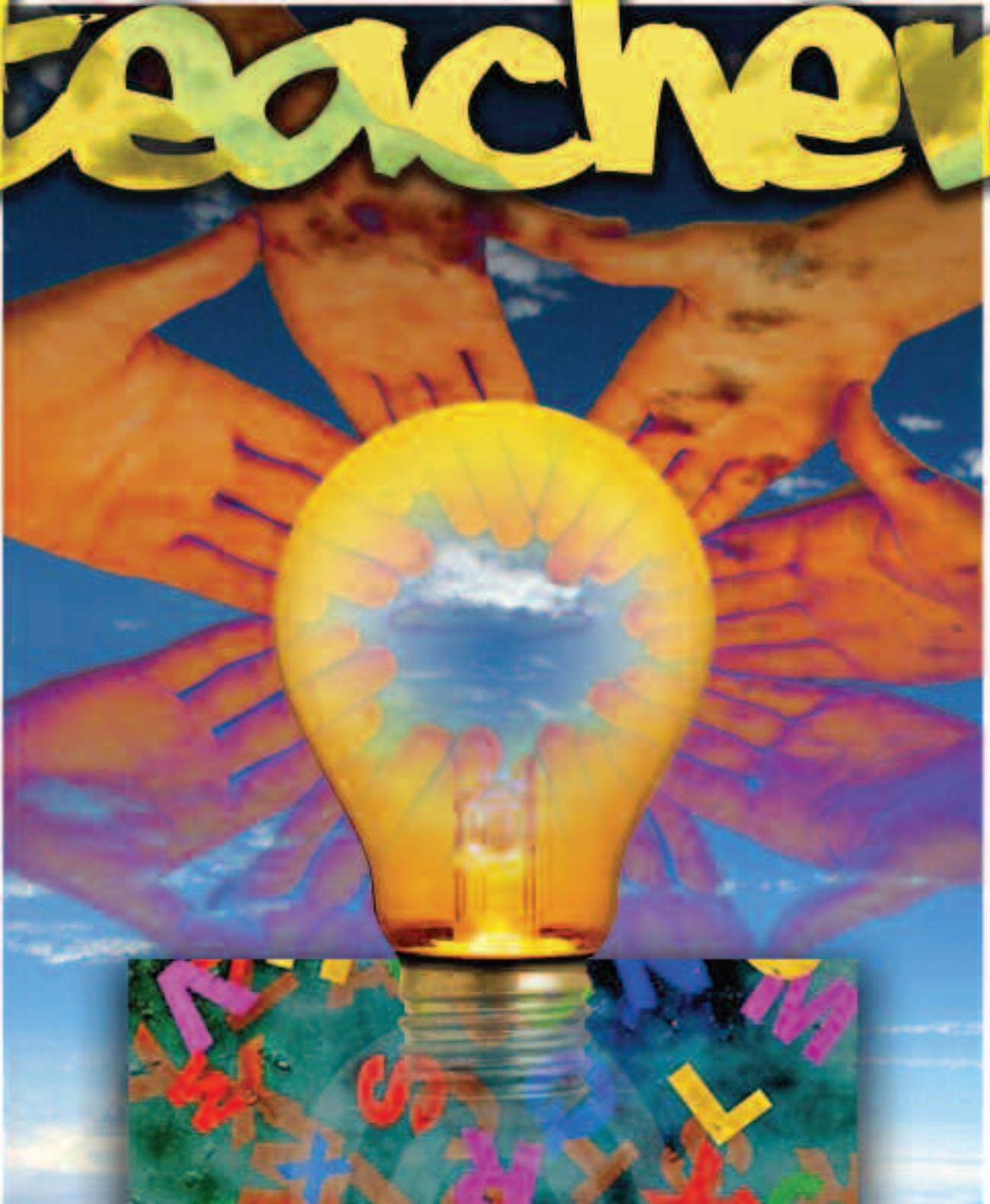
But back in the classroom, Kharem is not satisfied. So he keeps pressing.

As he and his PATHS students progress in their conversation from slavery to modern times, one student is having trouble stringing her thoughts together. Kharem tells her to take her time. She laments that too many of her peers don't take their education seriously and adds that those without an education tend to live in a kind of modern slave mentality.

"One thing you guys should always realize," Kharem tells the class, "is that the struggle's not over." ■

creating a new kind of

# teacher



by Jamilah Evelyn

*Several years ago, a group of faculty members from the Brooklyn College School of Education decided to get together once a month over coffee and bagels to discuss their research interests. Their discussions and research drafts eventually became a book, Teaching Teachers: Building a Quality School of Urban Education (Peter Lang Publishing, 2004). Coedited by Joe L. Kincheloe, Alberto Bursztyn, and Shirley R. Steinberg, the book is a collection of essays on urban education that features the research of several Brooklyn College professors. Brooklyn College Magazine gathered three of the faculty who contributed to the book—Bursztyn, Wayne A. Reed, and Alma Rubal-Lopez—to find out what they think the College can tell the rest of the education world about teaching teachers.*

**BC Magazine:** Professor Reed, in your chapter, you talk about a tragic divide between schools and their communities, and you say that urban schools of education are in a unique position to negotiate that divide. But you also talk about how much distrust there has been historically between many colleges and local low-income communities. How does a college tackle that mistrust in order to make inroads in the community? Or is that a chicken-and-egg kind of thing? How has the Brooklyn College School of Education dealt with this?

**Reed:** You're right in identifying this issue. I think the primary way a college can tackle this mistrust is by being present and active in low-income communities. It's one thing to invite community constituents to come to the College; it's quite another for the College to seek and maintain a presence in these communities. I remember leading a high school class a couple of years ago. One of the students raised his hand and asked, "Professor, why don't your students want to come to our neighborhood?" What could I say? Concerning the School of Education's approach to this, I think the growing presence of our faculty in the schools of East New York and Bushwick speaks for itself.

**BC Magazine:** How has the School of Education infused the kind of community-building spirit that you talk about into the curriculum here? Are there certain courses that emphasize this? Is it more of a culture than a curriculum issue?

**Reed:** I see community-oriented approaches emerging in the culture of the School of Education and in the curriculum. Because more education faculty members are intersecting their work with low-income schools and neighborhoods, it follows that the narratives we bring into our collegial relationships influence, at least to some extent, the culture of our practice. In our curriculum, I see more readings and discussion of issues related to urban education and urban issues. Quite a few of our courses now include community-based assignments—that is, assignments that help students in the School of Education develop their community knowledge. Also, since 2006, I've been working on a course called "Community Teaching." The purpose of the course is to help teachers develop their practice in the context of the social and cultural framework of the neighborhood they serve.

**Bursztyn:** It's really in how we conceptualize our work in general, and it has to do with understanding the complexity of urban settings. It's not enough to teach students how to teach a certain subject and then send them out. Teachers have to understand the community in which they will be working.

**BC Magazine:** Professor Rubal-Lopez, I think you hit on this notion in your chapter when you talk about understanding the greater context of the students' lives.

**Rubal-Lopez:** I always teach my students that they should use whatever their students bring with

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your students.

them instead of making assumptions and going from there. There are certain assumptions made that very often end up being stereotypes. If you are a teacher and you are sent somewhere in Crown Heights, for example, you cannot assume that because you have twenty black kids in front of you, they are poor; that their parents are illiterate, that they don't know anything, and that you are going to be their savior and teach them. There's such diversity in New York that assumptions like that are deadly. You can't assume that just because a student is Chinese he's good at math. And I can tell you as a counselor that assumption was made for years. If students are Chinese, you put them in advanced math, and then you know what? They're failing the math course. Rather, you should find out what they know and use that as a basis of teaching. If you're just throwing information and you're not connecting that information to anything in that student's experience, he or she is much less likely to retain the information. Really knowing the community, instead of making assumptions, will help you connect with your students.

**Bursztyn:** In Brooklyn, you have a very rich variety of perspectives and a very diverse student population. We have to create conditions that introduce our students in the School of Education to those differences. We have to prepare them to develop empathy. If you look at most of the work in the School of Education, you will find an interest in helping students develop a critical view of school practices and an openness to change. Part of our mission is to introduce our students to new ideas. It's not sufficient to give them the tools to teach lessons that maintain the status quo in underperforming schools. We see ourselves as helping students develop critical thinking, a

sense of advocacy, and an understanding of the nature of the challenge in front of them. We also teach them to work collaboratively with parents and with administrators. It's a complicated job. We have to help them find meaning behind their work.

**BC Magazine:** Professor Rubal-Lopez, in your chapter you talk about knowledge management versus knowledge acquisition. Can you explain that a little?

**Rubal-Lopez:** It's about not just accepting knowledge but questioning that knowledge. I'm teaching theories. I always ask my students: What's the problem with this theory? You have to deconstruct knowledge. And I always tell them, don't take all this seriously. Look at the theory, use what you can, and disregard the rest. Nothing is written in stone. And I think that's how you should approach teaching and learning.

**BC Magazine:** Is that kind of thinking typical in American education right now?

**Rubal-Lopez:** I don't think so. Especially right now with No Child Left Behind, they are teaching for the test. Teachers are under a lot of pressure; they're being told basically what to teach, and that becomes very hard.

**Bursztyn:** Because of state and federal mandates, much of their working lives will be spent focused on test results, which is not entirely inappropriate. But there is so much more to teaching.

**Rubal-Lopez:** You can't just stuff somebody's head with information. It's like the way we teach language in this country. You learn language through using it, but it is not taught that way in most places. Teachers

stand in front of the blackboard and write a bunch of stuff, but they don't really use language. Classrooms are set up so that kids don't talk to one another. You have to develop group exercises in which they are talking to one another. It's the same with other subjects. You have to connect to what they know. In the last ten to fifteen years, a lot of information has come out on how the brain works and how we learn and retain information. Teaching has to change to take all of this into account.

**BC Magazine:** One of the biggest ways that teaching has changed over the last several years is through the creation of so-called learning communities. Professor Reed, in your chapter you mention that you helped set up a learning community in East New York that is now seven years old. Can you update us on how it's going? Has Brooklyn College made the long-term commitment that you say is so necessary?

**Reed:** The learning community we started seven years ago is alive and well. (However, if I were to rewrite the chapter I might not use the term *learning community* since it has developed its own identity in higher education.) Our collaborative relationships with schools and community organizations are broader and more comprehensive than they were in 2000. Our deepening ties to Performing Arts and Technology High School have contributed to this in a major way. Having a high school as a base has solidified our ties to the elementary schools and has given us a stronger platform from which to work in the East New York community. For example, we are in the third year of the East New York Teen Summit hosted at Brooklyn College every spring. It brings youth from eight East New York high schools to the campus for a day of dialogue.

**BC Magazine:** There's such a high level of community involvement on the part of the School of Education faculty. Has that made all the difference?

**Bursztyn:** It's absolutely necessary that everyone working in teacher education keep some kind of link with the field. What might be different about us is the extent of our faculty involvement. Most schools of education will put an emphasis on one or two schools. But we have individual faculty members who take advantage of the opportunity we have for broader engagement in communities. Our students need to be engaged in the field and exposed to a variety of circumstances. I think most of us see it as a necessary part of the training we do, because we need to impart a nuanced understanding of the urban setting. It's very helpful—actually it's a privilege—to be in this diverse and vibrant setting. So many of our students are immigrants, or from underrepresented groups in the teaching profession. I think they come here with an openness to seeing different perspectives. The work of teaching is about trying to make a better future for all children. There's a real interest in the other and in self improvement, and I think we need to know how to capitalize on that. We don't have all the answers, but one thing we do well is that we keep asking questions. We keep trying to find approaches that make sense. If we restricted ourselves to the textbook, we wouldn't accomplish our goals. We want our students to understand the leeway they have in creating their own roles as agents of change. ■

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# New Director Appointed at the Center for the Study of Brooklyn

**Gretchen Maneval will lead the center in its study of critical issues affecting the borough.**

*Gretchen Maneval, a widely respected city planner and national housing expert, has assumed the role of director of the Center for the Study of Brooklyn, succeeding Pulitzer Prize-winning Professor Paul Moses, who served as the center's director from its creation in 2005.*

*Maneval joins the center after working for five years with the Fifth Avenue Committee (most recently as FAC's director of housing development), a Brooklyn-based nonprofit organization with twenty-nine years of community development experience. At FAC, Maneval managed an affordable housing, commercial, and community development portfolio of over \$100 million, with more than three hundred residential units in twenty-eight buildings. At FAC, Maneval's research and advocacy work with inclusionary zoning precipitated a reexamination of this policy tool as a way to ensure the creation of affordable housing with new residential construction in New York City.*

*"Ms. Maneval's keen insight into the issues that shape life in our borough will solidify the center's unique position as a critical source of urban research and analysis," President Kimmich said in announcing her appointment.*

*Maneval has a master's in city planning from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and a B.A. from the University of Virginia. She has worked on public housing issues at the federal level, first as a consultant in HUD's Office of Public and Indian Housing, and then as a senior analyst with the Harvard Graduate School of Design's Public Housing Operating Cost Study.*

*"In socioeconomic terms, Brooklyn is dynamic, vibrant, and nuanced, reflecting myriad trends that are emerging nationwide with the climate of reinvestment in our inner cities," Maneval says.*

*The Center for the Study of Brooklyn is the first academic research center devoted exclusively to the study of public policy issues in Brooklyn. It is a primary source of independent, nonpartisan research on the complex issues facing the borough and its 2.5 million residents. Key among Maneval's responsibilities will be identifying new sources of funding for the center and ensuring that the student body becomes actively engaged in the center's work.*

## **What attracted you to the Center for the Study of Brooklyn?**

After spending five years developing affordable housing at a Brooklyn-based community development corporation, I was looking for an opportunity to continue to give back in a venue that was broader in scope policywise. The Center for the Study of Brooklyn seemed like a perfect fit.

The center addresses the need for an elevated and coordinated presence representing Brooklyn in the city, state, and federal arenas. I have a deep respect for those already doing important public policy work in Brooklyn. We will work to create a harmonized voice that includes residents, businesses, local government, nonprofit groups, and academic institutions. Also, having the opportunity to develop partnerships with Brooklyn College faculty, staff, and students, as well as community groups, elected officials, and others for the advancement of the center's work is phenomenal.

## **How did your experiences as a senior research analyst in a Harvard housing study help you in your role?**

I learned how important it is, when you're framing a public policy issue, to listen to those experiencing the effects of whatever that issue is. For instance, in the public housing operating cost study, we met monthly with twenty or so executive directors from public housing authorities across the country for over two years, in addition to visiting their public housing sites. We found that the most important information was embedded within the experience of those operating and living in public housing, not in the federal-level data. So much of analyzing a problem properly is learning how to ask the right questions of the right people, and really listening to their answers.

## **What are the benefits of having the center located on campus at Brooklyn College?**

Being based at Brooklyn College gives us the opportunity to draw on the expertise of the faculty, staff, and alumni, as well as the talent and vision of the students. We are in this great borough of Brooklyn, and the diversity of Brooklyn College reflects the diversity of the borough. Students, faculty, and staff not only feel the impacts of the same public policy issues that other people in the borough are dealing with,



they can also inform our work and disseminate findings in the communities in which they live and work.

**Since college, you have been involved in community development programs. When and why did you become so interested in urban planning?**

My parents work in the fields of urban planning, community development, and printing. I learned from them how giving back to society could be manifested in a career path.

What really solidified my commitment to taking the route of community development and urban planning was an internship at the Enterprise Foundation one summer in college. The Enterprise Foundation was founded by James Rouse, who revitalized many downtown areas, like Harbor Place, at the inner harbor in Baltimore. Jim Rouse believed you had to tackle problems like affordable housing, education, health care, and economic development in a comprehensive way rather than separately. His positive outlook against daunting conditions, and his belief in a goodness that resides deep in us all, certainly inspired my life's work.

**What are the center's goals for the coming years in regard to public policy?**

One of the reasons the Center for the Study of Brooklyn was founded was a perceived lack of data about Brooklyn. For example, a community group wants to find indicators for HIV/AIDS infection rates. Where can they find these? Well the data are probably out there somewhere—city

*We're very much focused on linking the center's resources and those of Brooklyn College with the community.*

agencies, foundations, hospitals—but people might not have the time or know how to look for them.

One of the roles that the center will be playing is as a repository of data. We'll provide links on a new website that we're launching so that community groups, elected officials, faculty, students—anybody in the community—could go to our website and say, "I want information about Brooklyn, about my neighborhood, on this subject" and be able to find it with ease.

Further, there are some incredibly talented and influential faculty here at Brooklyn College. We want to find out who is doing what work about Brooklyn in order to produce a catalog to be posted on our new website so that people at Brooklyn College, as well as in the community, have access to this information. This catalog could, for example, help to connect a professor who might be studying water quality issues at the Prospect Park lake to a community group that needs such research but doesn't know where to find it.

We also hope to launch three public policy initiatives in 2008—one on HIV/AIDS, one on sustainability, and one on diversity and tolerance.

Brooklyn has been identified by the Centers for Disease Control as having the highest number of adolescents diagnosed with HIV/AIDS nationally. Further, in 2004, 89 percent of new HIV/AIDS diagnoses in Brooklyn were in persons of color (70 percent black, 19 percent Hispanic). These are alarming statistics. The center will strive to examine a public policy issue such as this from a different perspective (like how incarceration rates in specific neighborhoods are affecting neighborhood HIV/AIDS rates).

We will then apply the findings of our research by working with stakeholders to propose and advance solutions to public policy concerns. Oftentimes our work will develop through a lens of social and economic justice. I'm encouraging all Brooklyn College faculty, staff, and students to contact the center if they'd like to become involved with any of these initiatives, or have ideas for new work. I can be reached via e-mail at [gmaneval@brooklyn.cuny.edu](mailto:gmaneval@brooklyn.cuny.edu), or by calling (718) 951-5852. ■

# alumni *News and Sightings*

## GOT CLIPS?

*If you've been in the news lately, let us know. Items for Alumni News and Sightings may be e-mailed to [bcmag@brooklyn.cuny.edu](mailto:bcmag@brooklyn.cuny.edu) or mailed to Brooklyn College Magazine.*

Celebrating her ninetieth birthday in April, **Frieda (Weinstein) Greene, '37**, was hailed by *American Libraries* magazine as "the oldest gainfully employed library worker in America." Greene headed a hematology lab while living in Brooklyn, but when she and her husband retired to Florida she began volunteering at the Boynton Beach City Library. In 1993 they hired her, and she currently works four hours a day, five days a week, reshelving books in the nonfiction section.

**Stan Fischler, '54**, a sports broadcaster and author, is one of four recipients of the 2007 Lester Patrick Trophy. The prestigious award, named in honor of the longtime general manager and coach of the New York Rangers, has been presented annually since 1966 by the National Hockey League for outstanding service to hockey in the United States. Fischler, who began working for the Rangers the year that he graduated from BC, is known for his vast knowledge of the game. He is not only a hockey analyst but has also authored many books on hockey (and also on the New York subway system), often with his wife, Shirley, as coauthor. His latest book, *Metrolce: A Century of Hockey in Greater New York*, deals with the New York Rangers, the New York Islanders, and the New Jersey Devils.

In October, **Richard L. Sandor, '62**, was named one of forty-three "heroes of the environment" by *Time* magazine. Sandor was recognized as the founder of the Chicago Climate Exchange and the "father of carbon trading." The Climate Exchange is self-described as "a greenhouse gas

emissions reduction, registry, and trading system." Sandor is chairman of the exchange's parent company, Climate Exchange PLC, based in the United Kingdom. The recipient of an honorary degree from the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in 2004, he was lauded for "pioneer work in the design and implementation of innovative and flexible market-based mechanisms to address environmental concerns."



© *Selina Trieff, Two Sheep*

"**Selina Trieff: Master of the Look, a 30-Year Overview**" was the title of the career retrospective at the Provincetown Art Association and Museum this summer. Trieff, '55, and her husband, Robert Henry, '55, a long-time faculty member in Art at Brooklyn College, are an artistic power couple—their half-century of collaboration has been memorably captured in the 2005 documentary *Their Lives in Art: Robert Henry and Selina Trieff*. These days both are busy at work in their Wellfleet studios. "If I wasn't painting," Trieff told the *Provincetown Banner*, "I'd be impossible."

Shed no tears for **Karen Benezra, '83**, who stepped down after thirteen years with *Brandweek*, the nation's top marketing magazine, the last six in the editor's chair. She "quit smart," as she explained in her final editor's note, and will now head NielsenTrend, a new venture that will incorporate the wealth of information from the Nielsen company to deliver accurate

analysis of future trends in consumer behavior: "What will it feel like on the other side?" she mused. "Mighty strange, I'm sure. Having covered the headiest days of the cola wars to fast-food chaos and Hollywood flameouts, I've had a great ride."

Those looking for **Cindy Gatto, '85**, will find her in The Mudpit—the clay studio she opened in Williamsburg, Brooklyn, in 1999. Housed in a 2,700-square-foot space, Gatto's thriving business serves more than two hundred students and artists who sculpt clay and throw pots in the studio and fire the resultant work in one of the many kilns on the premises. One of the attractions at The Mudpit is a permanent raku kiln, described in an *AM New York* profile as "similar to the ones used in ancient Japanese firing techniques."



*Cindy Gatto's Lidded Jar 2*

The *New York Sun* treated **Morris Mark, '61**, to "Lunch at the Four Seasons," a regular feature in the newspaper. The discussion ranged over free markets, global investment, and the strategies he uses to manage \$1 billion in assets as the president of Mark Asset Management. But his most profound insights were learned from his parents, Max and Frieda, during his early years in Flatbush. "Professional success is great to have, but one's family is most important,"

he told the reporter. "In my scheme of things, here's how I see myself: husband, father, and then a business person. Within that context, I'm a very involved person."

Next time you're in Fortunoff's shopping for jewelry or home furnishings, drop **Arnie Orlick's** name and see what it gets you. In May, the veteran retailer and Class of 1969 graduate became the first CEO of the New York-based retailer, founded in 1922, ever recruited from outside the Fortunoff family. *Furniture Today* reported that Orlick wants to keep the traditional styles of the Fortunoff furniture but broaden into a more "casual, lifestyle vein."

**Herbert Leibowitz, '56**, has been editing *Parnassus: Poetry in Review* since cofounding the journal in 1973, but this fall, citing budget constraints, he produced the final issue. The *Wall Street Journal* noted the difference between *Parnassus* and *Poetry*, the Chicago-based journal that received a \$200 million bequest in 2002 from the heiress to a pharmaceutical fortune: *Parnassus* has scrimped by on an annual budget of less than \$100,000 and was produced out of the apartment next door to Leibowitz's Upper West Side home. *Poetry* has a \$1.3 million annual budget, a suite of fancy offices in Chicago, and can now afford to give prizes to its poorer relations. This year *Poetry* bestowed the Randall Jarrell Award in Criticism on Leibowitz for editing a journal that was "intelligent and learned as well as lively and enjoyable to read."

The *New Pittsburgh Courier* praised the "Stevie Wonder-ful vibe" of the debut disc from **Kendra Ross, M.A., '06**, entitled *New Voice*. Ross is a record industry insider who has performed with such artists as Kanye West and Talib Kweli. Besides writing, producing, and performing the music on *New Voice*, she also was involved in the



packaging and marketing of the ten-track CD. Ross, a Pittsburgh native, now makes her home in Brooklyn and is busy promoting her current release while working on her next.

Congratulations to **Ruth N. Quiles, M.S., '85**, who is among the winners of Time Warner's first "Principal of Excellence Awards" that honor "exemplary leadership in New York City public schools." Since becoming principal of the School of Performing Arts (P.S. 131) in Borough Park in 1999, Quiles has focused on improving the scores of her school's growing population of English language learners, who now make up 40 percent of the student body. She has also partnered with a number of cultural organizations, including Lincoln Center and the Brooklyn Conservatory of Music.

**Silvio Torres-Saillant, '79**, never graduated from high school. But thanks to Brooklyn College, this native of the Dominican Republic has enjoyed a fruitful academic career. He was recently named a Tolley Distinguished Teaching Professor at Syracuse University, where he is an associate professor of English and the director of the Latino-Latin American Studies Program. Coming to Brooklyn College after earning his G.E.D., Torres-Saillant immersed himself in the humanities and took language classes in Latin, Spanish, French, and English. He told the *Syracuse Post-Standard* that his love of languages

was sparked when, as a boy, he walked over a bridge and observed the ripples in the water. "It dawned on me . . . that I didn't have a rich enough vocabulary to describe what I was seeing."

Playwright **Michael Bradford, M.F.A., '01**, continues the string of memorable plays that he began while a student at Brooklyn College. This fall, Hygienic Art Inc. performed three of Bradford's plays in New London, Connecticut, near the University of Connecticut, where Bradford now teaches. Included were performances of *Root Woman* and *Willy's Cut and Shine*, and a new work, *Fathers and Sons*, a play with music about three generations of African American men who spend a restive night together waiting for news of a fourth-generation son who has been missing and is feared dead.

**Dr. Howard Bracco, '64**, CEO of Seven Counties Services Inc. in Louisville, Kentucky, is an eloquent advocate for the mentally ill who moved to the Bluegrass State in 1966 to pursue his doctorate in psychology at the University of Kentucky. One of the defining moments of his life occurred shortly after he received his degree and was working as a psychiatric aide at a mental hospital. A former boxer had developed a severe psychosis after killing someone and was in a catatonic state. For weeks, Bracco stopped and spoke to this bedridden patient and talked to him while gently stroking his beard. One day he altered his routine, and, after speaking with the unresponsive patient, turned to leave the room. The man unexpectedly sprang to life,

and shouted, "What's the matter, you ( — )?! Aren't you gonna stroke my beard?" "What I've come to understand over the years," Bracco told *Business First of Louisville*, "is how much hope there is."



At five feet, seven inches tall, **Lonnie Ritzer, '76**, didn't have much of a future in sports, so he became a tax attorney. Through his work as a partner at Shapiro Sher Guinot & Sandler, a Baltimore-based firm, Ritzer became Hall of Famer Cal Ripken Jr.'s tax attorney, advising the sports icon on the many ventures of Ripken Baseball, the Cal Ripken Sr. Foundation, and the Aberdeen Ironbirds, the minor league baseball team Ripken owns. But old dreams die hard: Ritzer told the *Baltimore Business Journal* that he still "can't go to a baseball game without fantasizing about being the pitcher."

The *Times Herald-Record* reports that **Esther (Lelah) Grossman, '53**, was honored by the Fallsburg School District this fall. A track and field star in her native India, Lelah was a member of that country's 1948 Olympic team and won national championships in basketball and table tennis. At Brooklyn College, where she majored in physical education, she was on the basketball, water ballet, and field hockey teams. Moving to

upstate Sullivan County in the 1950s, she was the first woman hired as a physical education teacher at Fallsburg High School, where she spent the next thirty years, taught swimming, began the girls' intramural sports teams, and coached championship teams in field hockey and volleyball.

Woodwind virtuoso **Eddie Daniels, '63**, released a new double CD, *Homecoming—Live at the Iridium*, that will please fans of his clarinet and saxophone playing. One CD features his clarinet work and the other his tenor saxophone. But not too long ago, it seemed Daniels had packed up his sax for good. He told the *Santa Fe New Mexican* that when he moved to Santa Fe in 1994, he stopped playing the sax in public, and instead concentrated on clarinet, an instrument that Daniels plays in both the jazz and classical idioms (Leonard Bernstein once called him "a thoroughly well-bred demon"). But Daniels has substantial sax chops and first achieved notice on that instrument in The Thad Jones/Mel Lewis Big Band in the 1960s. Recorded on his sixty-fifth birthday at his favorite New York City jazz club, Daniels's newest release is "relaxing and comfortable," as one critic has said. "To me," says Daniels, "that's the ultimate compliment."

**Jumaane Williams, '01**, and his business partner, **K. Bain, '01**, had good jobs. Why did they want to quit them to open a vegetarian sandwich shop in Park Slope? "The 'crazy' word has come up a lot," Williams admitted to *New York Newsday*, which profiled the two entrepreneurs. One great help was the Restaurant Management Bootcamp, a city-

sponsored restaurant training workshop designed to help neophyte foodies navigate their way through New York City's dozens of permits and inspections. The Earth Tonz Café opened in October, and features a meatless menu of sandwiches, wraps, herbal teas, and healthful desserts.

**Larry Horn, '54**, is retiring from Pierce College in Woodland Hills, California, a two-year community college in the San Fernando Valley. At Pierce, where he taught sociology for fifty years, Horn was legendary, often dressing up in period costume for his classes and passing on unforgettable lessons to three generations of Pierce students. The *Los Angeles Daily News* called him "the professor of second chances" for his belief in his students' potential. "When you think of the thousands of young lives Larry has touched and changed here, well, you just don't replace a teacher like that," said sociology chairperson Betty Odello. "His retirement is a huge loss."

Another retiree is **Sidney Berger, '57**, who leaves the University of Houston drama department after thirty-eight years. He will, however, continue to run the Houston Shakespeare Festival and the Childrens' Theater Festival that he started in the 1970s, as well as teach. "A Brooklyn College professor of English named Randolph Goodman changed my life when he handed me a worn copy of Shakespeare's plays and commanded, 'Read this.'" he told the *Houston Chronicle*. "An hour later, tending to an injured ankle in a whirlpool bath at the gym, I opened randomly to *Henry VI* and was immediately enrapt. I've stayed that way for the past fifty years."

Take that, John Steinbeck! The third novel by author **Rilla Askew, M.F.A., '89**, follows a family of down-on-their-luck Okies in the depths of the Great Depression. In *Harpson* (University of Oklahoma Press, \$24.95), Askew tells the tale of Harlan Singer and his child-bride, Sharon Thompson, as they search hobo jungles and Hoovervilles and ride the rails looking for a home. As the *Oklahoma City Oklahoman* notes, "Unlike *The Grapes of Wrath*, *Harpson* was written by a native Oklahoman, not a carpetbagger who never visited the locale."



**Dirk Johan Stromberg, M.Mus., '04**, currently on the faculty at Bilgi University in Istanbul, Turkey, was a guest at Vietnam's Ho Chi Minh City Conservatory of Music in September, where he collaborated with local Vietnamese folk musicians according to Vietnam.net. It was the third visit to the Far East for this peripatetic composer, whose first CD, *Tropendrift* (2006), was inspired by the exotic poems of Albert Hagenars about Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, and Indonesia. While recording it,

Stromberg supported himself by playing piano on a cruise ship in Mexico.

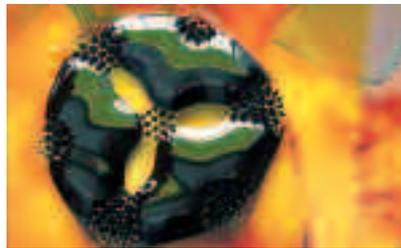
Businesspeople of San Diego will not be the same once **Laura Darius, '71**, gets through with them. The CEO of Darius Communications Inc. has opened a West Coast branch of her New York City-based executive consultancy and aims to teach the laid-back CEOs of "America's Finest City" how to look and behave more professionally—minor adjustments that could make a big difference in the boardroom. Her specialty is turning schlubby scientists in the biotech and pharmaceutical industries into polished pros. "People here pride themselves on being so casual," she told the *San Diego Business Journal*. "I think they really need to up the ante—instead of the flip-flops, Hawaiian shirts, and wrinkled Dockers."

Hip-hop producers are not all men—there are strong women in the studios laying down phat beats and bringing the heat. This summer **Tashelle "Shamash" Wilkes, M.A., '99**, presented her first film, *Lady Beat Makers, Vol. 1*, at the Atlanta Hip Hop Film Festival, Austin Women's Film and Music Festival, and the Hip-Hop Odyssey International Film Fest. Wilkes, a journalist, poet, and educator, runs Femmix.com, a website devoted to women producers in the hip-hop industry. Her thirty-two-minute film looks at five urban music producers who reflect on their lives, music, and the feminist movement within the hip-hop industry. For more on the film and women producers in hip-hop, check out [www.Femmix.com](http://www.Femmix.com).

**Don and Mera, '65, Rubell** have amassed one of the world's most significant collections of modern art, and the Rubell Family Collection in Miami is a jaw-droppingly amazing assembly of work arranged in twenty-seven galleries, open to the public from December to May. In Israel for the opening of the *Memorials of Identity* exhibit at the Haifa Museum of Art featuring works from their collection, the Rubells talked to the newspaper *Haaretz* about their lifelong obsession with art, which began soon after they met in the Brooklyn College Library, when Don, a Cornell student, was briefly taking chemistry classes at BC. Don would later have a thriving obstetrics practice and Mera did well in real estate, but their collecting mania began when they were poor newlyweds and shared a walk-up apartment with a badly cracked wall. "It was literally too expensive to paint it," Mera told *Haaretz*, "so we decided we would buy reproductions at the Museum of Modern Art. We cleverly framed them ourselves and covered all the cracks. It was an interesting exercise."

**Felice Oringel Frankel, '66**, is a top science photographer, and her work consists of fanciful images that look like fine art. But she rejects the artist label, telling the *New York Times* that "my stuff is about phenomena." Holding dual appointments at Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Frankel has a regular column in *American Scientist* magazine, and her work is exhibited around the world. Her two books, *Envisioning Science*

(2002) and *On the Surface of Things* (1997), have revolutionized the techniques and aesthetics of scientific photography. "She has a wonderful sense of design and color," her Harvard colleague George Whitesides told the *Times*. "It's hard to say she is not an artist."



**BCAA Post-Fiftieth Alumni Reunion Dinner and Awards Ceremony**

The Seventeenth Annual BCAA Post-Fiftieth Alumni Reunion Dinner and Awards Ceremony took place in September. Alumni of the classes of '32, '37, '42, '47, and '52 came to the campus to celebrate their seventy-fifth, seventieth, sixty-fifth, sixtieth, and fifty-fifth reunions respectively. Among the guests were Ethel Lagarenné Hagquist, '32 (left below), and Gandolfa Aiosa DeFronzo, '32 (right below), members of Brooklyn College's first graduating class, who came to take part in the school's first seventy-fifth reunion.



Lifetime Achievement Awards were presented to fourteen reunion class alumni, and Dr. Gerald W. Deas, '52, was the recipient of the Milton Fisher, '38, Second Harvest Award, acknowledging his accomplishments subsequent to his fiftieth reunion.

**BCAA Gala**

The Brooklyn College Alumni Association hosted its annual Gala Reunion Dinner at El Caribe in Mill Basin, Brooklyn, in October. The Alumna- and Alumnus-of-the-Year Awards were presented to writer and feminism advocate Francine Lifton Klagsbrun, '52, and the Honorable Sterling Johnson, Jr., '63,



senior judge of the United States District Court for the Eastern District of New York. A Family Achievement Award was presented to artist JoAnne Williams Carter, '76, and her brother, E.T. Williams, Jr., '60, financier and former Brooklyn College Foundation trustee. Alumni of Brooklyn College student publications, such as *Vanguard*, *Broeklundian*, *Kingsman*, *Excelsior*, *Belfry*, and *Calling Card*, were also saluted at the event.



### Galleries Open House

In October, the Brooklyn College Alumni Association hosted its first Galleries Open House in DUMBO at the 111 Front Street Galleries. Alumni and friends were invited to visit and view contemporary fine art from eleven independent galleries, including the Brooklyn Arts Council. Guests enjoyed wine, cheese, and piano music. Many were attending for the first time this treasure trove of art in Brooklyn's DUMBO.

### Alumni Chapters

Members of the Israel Chapter visited the archaeological excavation at Tel Beit Shemesh, in July, where students from several branches of CUNY and other institutions were digging for the second year through Brooklyn College's "Israel: Then and Now" program under the supervision of Professor H. Arthur Bankoff, '65, chairperson of the BC Anthropology and Archaeology Department.

In August, Brooklyn College alumni in Northern California once again joined with transplanted alums from City College and Polytechnic University for the annual family-style, all-you-can-eat Summer Picnic at the Fremont Hills Country Club.

San Diego alumni and guests held their Membership Appreciation Brunch and Musicfest in October at the Eastview Rancho Bernardo Community Center. The juke box came loaded with music from the '40s through the '70s and beyond, and the bagels were loaded with lox and cream cheese—Brooklyn style!

In October, the Mid-New Jersey Chapter hosted a lecture at the Millburn Public Library entitled "Caring for Caregivers" given by life coach (and Hofstra alumnus) Jeff Ambers. Ambers addressed the need of boomer generation caregivers to attend to their own psychological needs while caring for ailing or elderly parents or spouses.

In October, Tucson alumni and guests gathered at the home of Judge Lillian Fisher, '42, for lunch and a presentation by Dr. Hunter Yost on "Maintaining Good Health, Vigor, and Increased Vitality." Yost offered information drawn from alternative healing, nutritional therapy, and traditional medicine.

Long Island alumni and friends came back to Brooklyn for their second visit to Green-Wood Cemetery for a walk through its magnificent grounds and a visit with such departed luminaries as Horace Greeley, Samuel Morse, Leonard Bernstein, and "Boss" Tweed. The unusual October heat did not daunt the group, who were planning a return trip before the tour ended. Also in October, Professor and Chairperson of the BC Anthropology and Archaeology Department H. Arthur Bankoff, '65, presented a program entitled "BC Digs the World." Bankoff showed slides of his work with students from

excavations all over the world, including Bulgaria, Cyprus, Israel, and sites closer to home in Brooklyn and Manhattan. The enthusiastic alumni were eager to tag along on his next dig!

The members of the Northern Metropolitan Chapter were literally hypnotized by the gripping presentation of guest speaker Joann Abrahamsen, '70, at a dinner in Rye Brook in October. During the presentation she taught the group how self-hypnosis can be a stress reducer and helpful to those dealing with such problems as insomnia and being overweight.

The members of the Southwest Brooklyn Chapter learned about some of Brooklyn's Victorian houses when Brooklyn borough historian Ron Schweiger, '70, gave a slide presentation for the group. The event was held on Halloween, so some guests wore costumes, and the dinner menu included a cauldron of punch.

In September, the Campus Chapter sponsored *Musical*, a membership appreciation event at which the performances of students from the Conservatory of Music and the Chamber Choir included some original compositions. The chapter's annual theater party was held in November on the opening night of *The Seagull*. At the dinner prior to the performance, Thomas A. Bullard, chairperson of the Theater Department, and Mary Robinson, the director, spoke about some of the preparations for the show, at which the entire audience was seated on the stage.

## Soldier, Teacher, Parent, **Prez**

*Hal Schaffer, '56, the new president of the Brooklyn College Alumni Association, was much more worldly-wise than most freshmen when he entered Brooklyn College in fall 1952. Two years earlier, in September 1950, he had landed with the First Marine Division at Inchon, Korea. It was his first, and most enduring, lesson in leadership. "MacArthur's strategy of outflanking the North Korean army worked," he says. "Unfortunately he didn't believe, or wouldn't believe, the Chinese would enter the 'police action.' The rest of his strategy got a lot of us killed for nothing. Truman did the right thing by firing him." His experience made Schaffer a firm believer in "the democratic governance process."*

*After graduating from Brooklyn College, Schaffer enjoyed a highly successful career as an educator, serving as a faculty member at Adelphi University on Long Island and as an administrator at Cortland State in the SUNY system, Salisbury State in the Maryland system, and Wilson College in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, until 1988. He now lives in retirement in South Florida. Here he talks about his experiences at Brooklyn College and his plans for the future.*

### **What was it like to attend Brooklyn College in the 1950s?**

First of all, for me as a returning vet, age twenty-two as a frosh, it was real s-c-a-r-y. Had it not been for a reference librarian named Antoinette Cioli, who took me through the labyrinth of beautiful La Guardia Hall and got me started on my first term paper for English 101, I may not have made it through my first semester.

And there were so many students running hither and yon all the time. Folk singers and their guitars and banjos seemed to be ubiquitous on the Quad.

### **Who were your classmates back then and what were they seeking from Brooklyn College?**

My classmates were very bright, for the most part, and generally four years younger than I. The coeds appeared to be much too young for me. And there was a handful of vets. What were they seeking? I guess the

same thing that I was. They were largely the children of immigrants who were using education to "make it in America."

### **How do the needs of today's students differ from those who were your classmates?**

Having visited the Brooklyn College campus about a half-dozen times a year for the past six or so years, and having spent most of my career on the campuses of three small colleges, it is my sense that today's students are so busy getting a degree that they are unable to participate in activities that don't have a direct relation to their career goals.

### **How can Brooklyn College alumni help today's students?**

The BCAA Board has standing committees that assist with recruitment, internships, career advice, mentoring, and post-graduate employment. Perhaps local alumni could visit the campus more often and



meet with students for Big-Brother- or Big-Sister-style chats. Also maybe our many alumni who contribute to the Brooklyn College Foundation could encourage and motivate their friends and classmates to think about giving back to the College.

### **You recently established a scholarship in your name and your late wife's. Do you think other Brooklyn College alumni should follow in your footsteps?**

The woman who eventually became my wife after we re-met in 2001 was not only a fellow member of the Brooklyn College Class of 1956, she was also a professional dancer who was offered a professorship of dance by Florida Atlantic University in the late 1960s. The only restriction I put on the scholarship I established was that it should be awarded yearly to a student in the creative or performing arts.

We all have reasons for what we do. It is clear to me that without Brooklyn College I would not have been able to achieve what I have in my life—three degrees, a successful career, wonderful friends, and ample opportunities to give back to society, to continue to learn, to travel, and to enjoy my leisure-time activities; to live to see my three sons mature, become successful in their own right, and go forward with their lives; and to enjoy my five grandchildren.



## Benchmates

This past June, as an expression of gratitude to Brooklyn College and the important role it has played in their lives, several graduates from the 1950s and '60s returned to the College to dedicate a handsome wooden bench. Inscribed "DuBois House, '58-'62," the bench was the gift of former members of one of the house plans that were part of College life in those years.

The DuBois House bench stands with seven others along the brick pathway that surrounds the Lily Pond near the southern corner of the Brooklyn College Library. The pool, with its walkways and lush foliage, forms a peaceful refuge where faculty, staff, and students can escape to read, study, meet a friend, or take a break from the hustle and bustle of campus life.

During their visit in June, the graduates received a brief tour before joining Brooklyn College President Christoph M. Kimmich at the Lily Pond for the bench dedication ceremony.

"Brooklyn College is definitely a state-of-the-art learning facility," said alumnus Victor Bardack, '62, one of the DuBois House group. "The school offers students use of hundreds of computers, and Internet and wi-fi access. The Library Café even has twenty-four-hour computer and Internet accessibility."

Bardack, now a successful screenwriter and film producer living in Beverly Hills, California, added: "The new sports and fitness complex and the Science Center, which are now under construction on the West Quad, are only part of the transformation that is creating a twenty-first-century campus here."

In addition to Bardack and his wife, Sherry, the group included Mike Salkin, Saul and Laurie Heitner, Sam and Nancy Raskin, Bob Feldman, Harvey Grossman, and Mel Schwartz. Other members who spent many pleasant hours at DuBois House but could not make the trip back were Michael Friedman, Jerry Imber, Harvey Mirsky, and Mike Phillips.

Urging alumni who were members of other groups to support the College, Bardack said, "The experiences and educational opportunities at Brooklyn College changed our lives and opened wonderful opportunities for us. Now is the time to give back."

*You and your organization can join the DuBois House group in dedicating a bench at the College's Lily Pond or elsewhere around campus by contacting William Healy of the Brooklyn College Foundation at (718) 951-5074. Bill can also help you and your group plan a visit to the campus.*



*Marvin Glassmann, '57, and Deanna Moskowitz Glassmann, '59, with their grandchildren. "After celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of Marvin's graduation," Deanna says, "we purchased shirts for all our grandchildren at the College bookstore. When our fifteen-year-old granddaughter was asked, while wearing her sweatshirt to school, whether her parents went to Brooklyn, she proudly replied, 'No, my grandparents did!'"*

# class Notes

*To all alumni: Many class years include the name and address of a class correspondent, who is the link between your class and Brooklyn College Magazine. When you have news about your accomplishments that you would like published in the magazine, please write to your correspondent. If your class has no correspondent, please send items directly to Brooklyn College Magazine, Brooklyn College, 2900 Bedford Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11210-2889.*

*You may also reach us by fax, (718) 951-4609, or e-mail, [bcmag@brooklyn.cuny.edu](mailto:bcmag@brooklyn.cuny.edu).*

*If you wish to volunteer to serve as a class correspondent, please write to the address above or call (718) 951-5065.*

—Class Notes Editor

## 1933

### Herbert Nestler

*Class Correspondent*  
5850 Sugar Palm Court, Apt. B  
Delray Beach, FL 33484-1093

## 1935

### Irwin Glick

*Class Correspondent*  
5071 C Nestingway  
Delray Beach, FL 33484-1093

## 1937

### Harry W. Anisgard

*Class Correspondent*  
2563 Greer Road  
Palo Alto, CA 94303

## 1939

### Leo Ashenbrenner

*Class Correspondent*  
52 Mackey Avenue  
Port Washington, NY 11050

## 1940

### Beatrice Persin Faden

*Class Correspondent*  
7185 N.W. 9 Court  
Margate, FL 330631936

University of Michigan Professor Emeritus of Mathematics **Maxwell Reade** celebrated his ninety-first birthday last April. In June, **Malvin Wald's** play *Stake Out* premiered in Sherman Oaks, California, as part of the FirstStage Playwrights Express twenty-first annual marathon of fifteen-minute plays.

## 1941

### Dr. Shirley Edelman Greenwald

*Class Correspondent*  
1 Washington Square Village, Apt. 16B  
New York, NY 10012

Author, editor, translator, New York University English professor, and Kurt Vonnegut confidant

**Walter James Miller** has published *Essential Vonnegut: Interviews Conducted by Walter Miller*, the first CD in a series that includes NPR reviews from 1971, 1984, and a special final talk in 2006. He also published *The Meteor Hunt*, the first English translation of Jules Verne's original manuscript (see Alumni Books). **Dr. Jerome Z. Litt** published the thirteenth edition of his dermatology database, *Litt's Drug Eruption Reference Manual Including Drug Interactions*. He is an assistant clinical professor of dermatology at the Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine in Cleveland (see Alumni Books).

## 1943

### Romola Ettinger Kaplan

*Class Correspondent*  
P.O. Box 648  
East Quogue, NY 11942

## 1944

### Renee B. Landau Eidlin

*Class Correspondent*  
30 Oak Street Extension, Apt. 507  
Brockton, MA 02401

## 1946

### Bernard R. Schwarz

*Class Correspondent*  
404 Beach 143 Street  
Rockaway, NY 11694

## 1947

### Reva Frumkin Biers

*Class Correspondent*  
4631 Ellenita Avenue  
Tarzana, CA 91356

## 1948

### Eneas Sloman Arkawy

*Class Correspondent*  
271-08G Grand Central Parkway  
Floral Park, NY 11005

### Ruthe Kerner Meisel

was appointed a judge by the Orange County Board of Elections for the Booker Creek Precinct in Chapel Hill, North Carolina.

## 1949

### Constantine K. Hall

*Class Correspondent*  
190 Maple Street  
Brooklyn, NY 11225

## 1950

### Louise J. Kaplan

*Class Correspondent*  
175 West 12 Street  
New York, NY 10011

### Audrey Galligen

received a certificate from the borough president of Queens in recognition of twenty years of service on the Queens Community Board. A devoted patron of the arts, she also wrote a poetic tribute to Angela Lansbury, which was read at a ceremony in her honor in June at The Players Club in New York City.

## 1951

### Marion Unger Gordon

*Class Correspondent*  
70 East 10 Street  
Apt. 9P  
New York, NY 10003

### Gerd Korman,

professor emeritus of American history at Cornell University's School of Industrial and Labor Relations,

recently published a memoir entitled *Nightmare's Fairy Tale: A Young Refugee's Home Fronts, 1938-1948* (see Alumni Books).

## 1952

### Sheila Talmud Raymond

*Class Correspondent*  
3 Lakeside Lane  
Bay Shore, NY 11706

**Irene Deitch**, professor emerita of psychology at the College of Staten Island, was elected to the board of the Division of Group Psychology and Group Psychotherapy of the American Psychological Association. She was reelected to the board for Media Psychologists, another APA division. In September, she received a Lifetime Achievement Award at the Post-Fiftieth Alumni Reunion at Brooklyn College. She was recently the recipient of a Woman of Achievement Award presented by the *Staten Island Advance* to residents of the borough who have devoted themselves to the betterment of the community. Former professor of English at City College and Yeshiva University **Henry Grinberg** published his debut novel, *Variations on the Beast*, an allegorical tale about life in Nazi Germany.

## 1953

### Ben Suntag

*Class Correspondent*  
1311 Franklin Lane  
Rockaway, NJ 07866  
[gatnus@optonline.net](mailto:gatnus@optonline.net)

## 1954

**Marlene (Marcia) Jacoby Hillman**  
*Class Correspondent*  
255 West 94 Street,  
Apt. 6Q  
New York, NY 10025

## 1955

**Geraldine Markowitz**  
*Class Correspondent*  
germarkowitz@earthlink.net

## 1956

**Mike Saluzzi**  
*Class Correspondent*  
1351 E. Mountain Street  
Glendale, CA  
91207-1837  
msaluzzi@earthlink.net

## 1957

**Micki Ginsberg**  
*Class Correspondent*  
217 E. Maple Avenue  
Moorestown, NJ 08057  
ginsberg10@gmail.com

## 1959

**Rosalie Fuchs Berle**  
*Class Correspondent*  
260 Garth Road  
Apt. 3J5  
Scarsdale, NY 10583

**Marlene Fishbane Rosenbaum** was recently appointed associate dean of University College at Fairleigh Dickinson University in New Jersey.

## 1960

**Saul Kravitz**  
*Class Correspondent*  
3382 Kenzo Court  
Mountain View, CA  
64040  
kravitzsaul@gmail.com

## 1961

**David S. Herskowitz**  
*Class Correspondent*  
1175 Kildeer Court  
Encinitas, CA 92024  
technologicalforecasting@yahoo.com

## 1962

**Steven J. Nappen**  
*Class Correspondent*  
38 Troy Hills Road  
Whippany, NJ 07981

**Dr. Richard Derman** is the associate dean for women's health at the School of Medicine of the University of Missouri-Kansas City. He recently received the International Relations Council Award for International Academic Leadership. Educator and children's book author **Marion Margolis** recently published the book *Sit! Stay! Sign!* (see Alumni Books).

## 1963

**Cliff Rosner**  
*Class Correspondent*  
111 Blue Willow Drive  
Houston, TX  
77042-1105

**Roberta (Bobbie) Johnson** is a professor of politics at the University of San Francisco. She recently won the USF Sarlo Prize for Excellence in Teaching. She edited *The Struggle against Corruption: A Comparative Study* (see Alumni Books).

## 1964

**Dr. Jay Orlikoff**  
*Class Correspondent*  
20 Beavertown Lane  
Stony Brook, NY 11790

**Walter Block** is professor of economics in the College of Business Administration at Loyola University in New Orleans. He holds the Harold E. Wirth Eminent Scholar Endowed Chair. **Richard Brenner** is a neurologist at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center. He is

also the author of *EEG on DVD: Adult-An Interactive Reading Session*, a teaching tool for neurologists, fellows, and technologists (see Alumni Books). **Ronald Feldman** coordinated Monroe (N.J.) Township's participation in the Senior Olympics competition for the third year in a row.

**Rochelle Kliot Follender** works as a part-time librarian in Montgomery County, Maryland. **Daniel Kaiser** retired in 2003 after forty years with the New York City Department of Education. For the last three years, he has been a work-study coordinator at a private residential special education high school in Lake Grove, Long Island. **Stephen Kutay** lives a semi-retired life in Santa Fe, New Mexico. **Sheldon Michaels** retired in 1997 as the attorney in charge of litigation for the Western Region of AT&T. He lives in Oakland, California, and is currently an arbitrator specializing in employment cases.

**Stanley Pearlman** runs the retained executive search firm Stanley Herz & Co., which he founded in 1980. He lives in Somers, New York. **Marie Shear** is a widely unheralded writer and editor by trade; satirist and musical comedy lover by temperament; and feminist by necessity. Her articles have appeared in fifty periodicals and anthologies. **Rochelle Fridzon Sitzer** is a children's book author and actress. She recently completed a

stint as Morgan le Fay in the Charlottesville, Virginia, community theater production of *Camelot*.

## 1965

**Barbara Berman Leveene**  
*Class Correspondent*  
24 Jubilee Circle  
Aberdeen, NJ 07747

## 1966

**Felicia Friedland Weinberg**  
*Class Correspondent*  
P.O. Box 449  
Clarksburg, NJ 08510

## 1967

**Sharon Weinschel Resen**  
*Class Correspondent*  
1740 Kimball Street  
Brooklyn, NY 11234

**Jan Wade Gilbert**, who discovered a cure for periodontal disease, also masquerades as The Obvious Philosopher; conducting "thank you" seminars for companies. He is the author of *The Guy's Cookbook*, now in its second edition.

## 1968

**Eileen McGinn**  
*Class Correspondent*  
210 East 15 Street  
Apt. 10N  
New York, NY 10003

**Nancy Lynch** was awarded the prestigious Knuth Prize for theoretical computer science. She is the NEC Professor of Software Science and Engineering at MIT.

## 1969

**Edward M. Greenspan**  
*Class Correspondent*  
1237 Avenue Z,  
Apt. 6G  
Brooklyn, NY  
11235-4360

Edwagreen@aol.com

## 1970

**Barry Silverman**  
*Class Correspondent*  
176 Stultz Lane  
East Brunswick, NJ  
08816  
Barry@successfulu.com

## 1971

**Constance Forte Pigozzi**  
*Class Correspondent*  
7802 16 Avenue  
Brooklyn, NY 11214

**Nanette Helena Yavel**, a therapist who works with autistic children and developmentally disabled adults, recently had a poem published in *risk, courage, and women: contemporary voices in prose and poetry*.

## 1972

**Dr. Stanley A. Alexander**  
*Class Correspondent*  
4 Indian Valley Road  
East Setauket, NY  
11790

## 1973

**Linda E. Gross Carroll**  
*Class Correspondent*  
32 Vienna Hills Drive  
Hackettstown, NJ  
07840  
(908) 637-6639  
lcarroll32@comcast.net

## 1974

**Diane Oeters Vaughn**  
*Class Correspondent*  
80 Kelsey Place  
Madison, CT 06443

## 1975

**Rubin Leitner**  
*Class Correspondent*  
138 East 96 Street  
Brooklyn, NY 11212

## “Grandma Dynamite’s” School Days

**For ninety-year-old alumna Marjorie Louer, '59, the same attributes that make a good teacher might well be the keys to a long life.**

Back in winter 2006, Marjorie Louer, a Brooklyn College graduate and retired public high school principal, tried to withdraw cash from an ATM. The machine rejected her. When she went to her bank, a clerk cut up her card right in front of her. Her account had been closed because she was dead, she was informed.

“Each time they talk to you about you being dead there is a little pain,” the Brooklyn native told the *Daily News* at the time, after finding out that a minor clerical error at the Social Security Administration had led to her unfortunate post-mortem status.

Louer eventually managed to persuade both the feds and her bankers to correct their mistakes and “revive” her. Rejoining the ranks of the quick pleased her mightily. After all, she was only eighty-nine years old and figured she still had a lot of living left to do.

As a child, growing up against the backdrop of World War I, Prohibition, the Roaring Twenties, and the Great Depression, she dreamed of becoming a doctor. Her father, who had suffered a head wound in the Navy during the war, eventually became paralyzed and unable to work. Marjorie, meanwhile, had been accepted to Hunter College’s pre-med program. With her dad no longer able to support the family, she had to give up her dream and went to work as a secretary.

Her marriage and the birth of two daughters—Susan, who like her mother would graduate from Brooklyn College, and Stephanie, who graduated from Columbia—followed. When the girls were old enough, Louer returned to work as a secretary. A neighbor, who worked as a city school teacher, casually mentioned to Louer that she might be able to get a higher-paying job as a school secretary.

She began as a substitute school secretary at P. S. 225 in Brighton Beach. The assignment gave Louer her first exposure to the type of student who would later shape her career—troubled young men whose unruly behavior led to their being called to the principal’s office. She found

she liked them. “Over the years,” she recalls, “I guess I’ve developed a thing for bad boys. The young ones, not the old ones.”

When she landed a permanent secretarial position at P. S. 9—where she had once been a student—one of her assignments was to handle the school’s payroll. The experience taught her that teachers made a lot more money than secretaries. Over her husband’s objections, in September 1949 she registered for night classes at Brooklyn College.

Louer graduated in 1959, after ten straight years of classes, evenings and summers included, with only one short break in 1953. With her B.A. degree, plus 30 credits, she was hired as a New York City teacher. She steadily climbed the career ladder through acting assistant principal, assistant principal, acting principal, and finally principal.

“I took over a high school that was just for boys who couldn’t get along in their regular zoned high schools,” she recalls. “The school just had a number. I took to calling it ‘Sterling High School’—which was kind of an ironic name. But they liked the name and it stuck.”

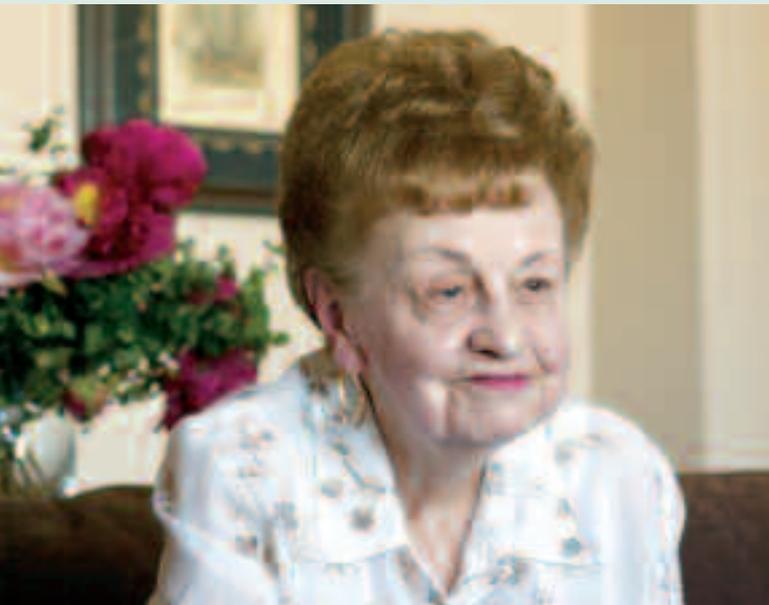
Louer remained as principal at Sterling High School until 1992, when she was seventy-five years of age. “By then my kids were calling me ‘Grandma Dynamite,’” she says. The school authorities figured it was time for her to retire. “I didn’t want to retire,” she says. “I spent my first week sitting around the house. I was bored.”

She went out for a walk and found a card shop with a “Help Wanted” sign in the window. “I went in and talked the manager into hiring me,” she says.

After a short time at the card shop she responded to a want ad in the paper. “The IRS was looking for people who could advise them on how to improve their customer relations,” Louer says. “I got the job.”

These days, she’s involved with the day-to-day operations of her co-op board. “Then, too,” she says, “I’ve finally gotten interested in this whole grandmother and great-grandmother thing.” Louer has three grandchildren and six great-grandkids.

“Oh, yes,” she adds. “And then there’s the thing with the medians.”



The thing with the traffic medians is a multimillion-dollar rehabilitation plan for the two-block stretch of Eastern Parkway in front of her home between Washington Avenue and Grand Army Plaza in Prospect Heights. Louer led a five-year fight to collect five hundred signatures to petition the city to redo the ragged stretch of the parkway. The improvements include widening the median, narrowing the service road, and reconstructing the main roadway. The project is scheduled to be completed in 2009, when the entire renewed length of roadway will become “Brooklyn’s Champs Elysées,” according to Borough President Marty Markowitz.

“A dream” was how Marjorie Louer described the plan that she put five years of her life into and now hopes to see completed.

It is also how she describes graduating from Brooklyn College. “The College gave me a career of working with and helping troubled teenagers. I fill with nostalgia whenever I realize the depth of the contribution that Brooklyn College made to my life.”

She says that “the topping on the cake was when they awarded me the Distinguished Alumna Award” in 1979.

## A Commonsense Formula for Teaching

*Marjorie Louer, retired principal of Sterling High School in Brooklyn’s Fort Greene section—where her charges included male teens chosen from all the borough’s neighborhoods who either had proved too difficult to handle by their locally zoned high schools or who had had run-ins with the juvenile justice system—says she was fortunate that her superiors had given her “pretty much a free rein in hiring teachers” for her own school.*

*“A lot of my students came from really bad homes,” she says. “I got along fine with many of them—it was like a gift I had—and I was fortunate in that I was able to use my own judgment in the selection of teachers for my school.”*

*Among the several qualities she says that she looked for in a teaching candidate at Sterling High School was flexibility. “Teachers in my school needed to be flexible,” Louer says. “They needed a full, rich background that they could fall back on to help them explain the various concepts of their lessons in different ways that the students could comprehend.”*

*Another quality that she sought out in a teaching prospect was a genuine liking for children. “Teachers in my school had to really like kids,” she says. “They had to see them as someone they wanted to teach, someone who could learn, and someone who could grow up to be a productive member of society.”*

*Also important when selecting prospective teachers, in Louer’s mind, was a sense of humor. “This might even be the top quality you have to look for in a teacher,” she says. “They have to be able to get along easily with the kids, to be able to laugh at things. They have to be optimistic.”*

## 1976

**Henry P. Feintuch**  
*Class Correspondent*  
 50 Barnes Lane  
 Chappaqua, NY 10514

In September, author, speaker, and martial arts hansi (grandmaster) **Stephen Kaufman** gave a talk on the philosophy of the Tao at the Chinese Scholars Temple at the Snug Harbor Cultural Center on Staten Island. **Larry Schiffer** is a partner at Dewey & LeBoeuf, LLP, in New York. He recently completed a two-year term as the president of the Albany Law School National Alumni Association. He has also been elected to the law school's Board of Trustees.

## 1977

**Michael Hanna**  
*Class Correspondent*  
 12 Woodlawn Road  
 Somerset, NJ 08873

## 1978

**Susan A. Katz**  
*Class Correspondent*  
 120 Pinewood Trail  
 Trumbull, CT  
 06611-3313

## 1979

**Anthony Esposito**  
*Class Correspondent*  
 265 Hamilton Drive  
 Red Bank, NJ 07701

**Barbara Rubel**, speaker and director of the Griefwork Center, Inc., in New Jersey, cowrote *Compassion Fatigue*, a training manual for the Department of Justice. She also contributed a chapter to *Remembering Our Angels: Personal Stories of Healing from a Pregnancy Loss*.

## 1980

Agnes C. Puello published an essay entitled Remembering Our Times Together: Stories of Family and Home, a mini-memoir that chronicles the life and times of Puello's friends and family (see Alumni Books). In August, iUniverse published **Christopher A. Puello's** *Papers from a Harvard/Yale Man: Examples of College Work*, a collection of four papers dealing with major events in the twentieth century (see Alumni Books).

## 1982

**Eileen Sherman Gruber**  
*Class Correspondent*  
 69 Derby Avenue  
 Greenlawn, NY 11740

## 1983

**Michael Kosik**  
*Class Correspondent*  
 331 Newman Springs Road  
 Building 1  
 Red Bank, NJ 07701  
 michael.kosik@ubs.com

## 1985

**Peter Huertas**  
*Class Correspondent*  
 5135 Fedora Drive  
 San Antonio, TX 78242  
 alamodude2001@yahoo.com

**Eric Rothenburg**, CPA, has been promoted to professor of accounting and economics at Kingsborough Community College of the City University of New York. He serves on his department's personnel and budget committee as well as being heavily involved with CUNY's ACT writing and CPE exams.

## 1986

**Ian Lee Brown**  
*Class Correspondent*  
 13978 Sawteeth Way  
 Centerville, VA 20121

## 1987

**Eric Steinhart**  
*Class Correspondent*  
 915 East 7 Street  
 Apt. 1H  
 Brooklyn, NY 11230

## 1988

**Lauren Korn Popkoff**  
*Class Correspondent*  
 951 Woodoak Drive  
 Baldwin Harbor, NY  
 11510

## 1990

**Beth Debra Kallman**  
*Class Correspondent*  
 8718 Ridge Boulevard  
 Brooklyn, NY 11209

## 1993

Award-winning singer/songwriter **Larry Lofin** (aka J. Phoenix), celebrated the release of his debut album, *Masterpiece*, with a performance at New York's legendary club The Bitter End.

## 1994

**Ilene Berkowitz**  
*Class Correspondent*  
 1575 46 Street  
 Brooklyn, NY 11219

## 1995

**Dr. Nathan Solat**  
*Class Correspondent*  
 2793 Lee Place  
 Bellmore, NY 11710

**Arlene Gralla Feldman** facilitates a creative writing workshop in Monroe Township, New Jersey.

## 1996

**Anthony Vitale**  
*Class Correspondent*  
 554 Beach 129 Street  
 Belle Harbor, NY  
 11694

**Tina Wells** has been made head of early childhood education for the Cooke Center for Learning and Development, New York City's largest provider of inclusive education for students ages three to twenty-one. Her job entails increasing the screenings of preschool children who are at risk for learning delays.

## 1999

**David Moskowitz**  
*Class Correspondent*  
 2327 East 18 Street  
 Brooklyn, NY 11229

## 2001

**Tatesha Bennett Clark**  
*Class Correspondent*  
 540 East 82 Street  
 Brooklyn, NY 11236

## 2002

**Igor Galanter**  
*Class Correspondent*  
 1342 East 18 Street  
 Apt. 6C  
 Brooklyn, NY 11230

## 2003

**Geoffrey S. Hersko**, an attorney in the Real Estate and Finance Practice Group at Hodgson Russ LLP, was recently admitted to the New York State Bar.

## 2004

**Yael Abraham**  
*Class Correspondent*  
 966 46 Street  
 Brooklyn, NY 11219  
 yct.abraham@gmail.com

## 2006

**Thomas Nazziola** was the featured composer on a radio program entitled "Monday Afternoon Classics with Gandalf" on WJFF-FM, Radio Catskill. He was interviewed about the contemporary score he and co-composer John Florio wrote for the classic 1931 film *The Blue Angel*.

## 2007

**Ezra Rich**  
*Class Correspondent*  
 205 West 95 Street  
 New York, NY 10025  
 EzraRich@gmail.com

**Meghan Keane** is an artist who directs the independent art studio bearing her name, which she founded in 2004. She is the founding director and curator of the Brooklyn College Honors Academy Art Gallery. She has received Brooklyn College's Charles G. Shaw Memorial Art Department Award for painting in each of the last three years.

**Attention Alumni:**  
 Please help us help you stay connected and up to date with information and communications from the College and your alumni association. Please send your e-mail addresses to:  
[alumni@brooklyn.cuny.edu](mailto:alumni@brooklyn.cuny.edu)

# in Memoriam

## Faculty

Lucille S. Bacon  
*Physical Education and  
Exercise Science Department*

Morton Berkowitz  
*Political Science Department*

Abraham S. Eisenstadt  
*History Department*

Martha Jean Hakes  
*Conservatory of Music*

H. Wiley Hitchcock  
*Conservatory of Music*

Jack Kuney  
*Television and Radio  
Department*

Ernest J. Leo  
*Modern Languages and  
Literatures Department*

Wendy Hall Maloney  
*SEEK Department*

Elizabeth Murray  
*Art Department*

Edwin Terry Prothro  
*Psychology Department*

Herman Rose  
*Art Department*

Alfred Russell  
*Art Department*

## Alumni

Sylvia Brazaza Segal, '32  
Edward Propper, '33  
Sylvia Trow Gail, '34

Arthur J. Levenson, '34  
Jessie Lubart Levey, '34  
Amelia Patterson Prince, '34  
Anne E. Sunderland, '34

Miriam Kessin Fishman, '35  
Ruth Fishman Goldstein, '35  
Milton Novak, '35

Mortimer J. Abramowitz, '36  
Daniel D. Bier, '36

Henrietta Marks Brooks, '36  
David Fishman, '36

Arline Ferns Henry, '36  
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George C. Motchan, '76

Morton Halpern, '78

Henry Coppedge, '79

Clark Siegfried, '79

Sheryl Taub Leibert, '85

Benedict A. Bowman, '86

Charles Giuliano, '89

Frank P. Neve, '96

Digna Maria Davis, '04

# recent Books

## Faculty Books

Jeffrey Biegel, Conservatory of Music, ed. Various composers, *Sonatina Album*. G. Schirmer, Inc., 2007, \$12.95, softcover with CD.

Jeffrey Biegel, Conservatory of Music, ed. Schumann, *Kinderscenen (Scenes from Childhood)*, Opus 15. G. Schirmer, Inc., 2007, \$12.95, softcover with CD.



Joseph B. Entin, Department of English, *Sensational Modernism: Experimental Fiction and Photography in Thirties America*. University of North Carolina Press, 2007, \$22.50, softcover.

Gertrude Ezorsky, Professor Emerita of Philosophy, *Freedom in the Workplace?* Cornell University Press, 2007, \$12.95, softcover.

Tanni Haas, Department of Speech Communication Arts and Sciences, *The Pursuit of Public Journalism: Theory, Practice, and Criticism*. New York, Routledge, 2007, \$24.95, softcover.

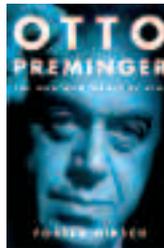


Lee Haring, Professor Emeritus of English, *Stars and Keys: Folktales and Creolization in the Indian Ocean*, with translations by Claudie Ricard and

Dawood Auleear. Indiana University Press, 2007, \$65, hardcover.



Joshua Henkin, Department of English, *Matrimony*. Pantheon, 2007, \$23.95, hardcover.



Foster Hirsch, Department of Film, *Otto Preminger: The Man Who Would Be King*. Alfred A. Knopf, 2007, \$35, hardcover.

KC Johnson, Department of History, and Stuart Taylor Jr., *Until Proven Innocent: Political Correctness and the Shameful Injustices of the Duke Lacrosse Rape Case*. Thomas Dunne Books, 2007, \$26.95, hardcover.

## Alumni Books



Stephanie Calmenson, '73, *Birthday at the Panda Palace*. HarperCollins, 2007, \$15.99, hardcover.

Stephanie Calmenson, '73, and Jan Ormerod, *May I Pet Your Dog: The How-to Guide for Kids Meeting Dogs (and Dogs Meeting Kids)*. Clarion Books, 2007, \$9.95, hardcover.



Louis Camporeale, '84, *New York City Parking Survival Guide*. Parking Pal Company, Inc., 2007, \$18.95, softcover.

Angelina C. Corbet, '73, '76, *The Little Pink Book of Feminine Leadership*. The Mobius Company, 2006, \$16, hardcover.



Robert Nathanson, '70, and Arthur Kimmel, *The College Athlete's Guide to Academic Success: Tips from Peers and Profs*. Pearson Prentice Hall, \$25, softcover.

Manuel Schonhorn, '55, *Defoe's Politics: Parliament, Power, Kingship, and Robinson Crusoe*. Reprint of hardcover edition published in 1991. Cambridge University Press, 2006, \$29.99, softcover.



Helen Zegerman Schwimmer, '69, *Like the Stars of the Heavens*. Jay Street Publishers, 2007, \$18.95, softcover.

Angelina Sithebe, '86, *Holy Hill*. Umuzi, 2007, \$16, softcover.

Benjamin Wrubel, '86, *Word Speaking*. iUniverse.com, 2007, \$25.95. [www.iUniverse.com/bookstore/book-detail.asp?isbn=0-595-46676-1](http://www.iUniverse.com/bookstore/book-detail.asp?isbn=0-595-46676-1)

## LETTERS *continued from page 3*

heating and cooling. The process involves holes to perhaps 10 meters' depth, and the circulation of tap water via one-inch pipe in a closed loop between the subsurface and the house. No water is consumed in the process. (By comparison, geothermal wells commonly are drilled to 2.5 to 3 kilometers depth, and in some fields to 4 kilometers—not exactly close to the surface.)

The number of structures using this shallow-source geothermal heating now exceeds 1 million, and the number is growing rapidly.

It is that combination of techniques and end uses that is surprising the geothermal industry in this country. Utilization would be accelerated if Congress in its wisdom offered the tax credits and financial grants given to other energy-producing industries. We really don't need to have the "hot rocks . . . close to the surface." What we need is a level playing field.

James Koenig, '54

*The writer is a director of GeothermEx, Inc., and of the International Geothermal Association.*

### **Robert Bell's Reply:**

*Dr. Koenig's exposition of geothermal heat pumps is truly important. The tragedy for the U.S. in the now concluded house-building boom is that heat pumps were not required on all new structures that could accommodate them. This is truly a renewable energy technology that works now and will get better and cheaper in the near future. It would go a long way to reducing both heating and air conditioning expenses for houses and many commercial buildings—and it does so with no CO<sub>2</sub> output.*

*The advantages of heat pumps are so obvious that they are truly a "no brainer." But the utter absence of political will for renewable energy during the current*

*Administration in the U.S. encouraged a staggering number of new structures to be built without these heat pumps. (Retrofitting existing structures is certainly more expensive.) Congress should act now to use all the potential powers of the federal government to require geothermal heat pumps in every new public and private building for which they are appropriate, and to offer financial aid for retrofitting those for which it is not too costly.*

*In addition, Dr. Koenig brings up another urgent matter: "a level playing field." The simple fact is that fossil fuel companies are the beneficiaries of a wide network of subsidies, some of which I detail in my recent book, *The Green Bubble*. Renewable energy, to the extent that it gets subsidies at all, gets them with nowhere near the same range, size or subtlety. Since the burning of fossil fuel pumps CO<sub>2</sub> into the atmosphere, subsidies to the fossil fuel industry are literally paying for our own suicide.*

*Oil subsidies are also literally pouring money into the bank accounts of, in some instances, people linked to those who pay for terrorist attacks on us. In any case, all imported oil or natural gas requires the export of our money to pay for it. This is, in fact, one of the major reasons for the fall of the dollar and the continuing rise of oil prices; to make up for the fall in the dollar, OPEC sees to it that oil, which is priced in dollars, gets more expensive. OPEC officials admit this in public statements!*

*Exported dollars could have been used to finance the growth of jobs here in the United States. Green jobs in Germany, the most advanced country in the deployment of many sectors of renewable energy, for example, went up from 157,100 in 2004 to 231,300 in 2006. Geothermal jobs there more than doubled from 1,800 to 4,200. Also consider that geothermal*

*energy is inherently local, so whatever jobs it creates around the drilling sites and local infrastructure are also local.*

*I would go much further on this matter than does Dr. Koenig in his letter. For survival, national security, and prosperity, I think the U.S. should dramatically tilt the playing field in favor of renewable energy technologies that work now—including geothermal. We should shift the subsidies from what is bankrupting and killing us, fossil fuels, to what can save us and bring us prosperity—renewable energy. And we need to do this now. Europe has made renewable energy a priority—we need to wake up and do the same.*

*I certainly hope the geothermal industry keeps drilling deeper.*

Robert Bell

*Chair, Department of Economics*

# a road *Less traveled*



Robert Leopoldi, '92, set out on the road to higher education with a dream of going into politics, or possibly becoming a lawyer. But along the way, an internship in the Albany office of a Queens assemblyman soured him on that aspiration.

"It wasn't allegations of corruption, backroom deals, or anything like that in the political system you read about in the newspaper or hear on the TV that turned me off," Leopoldi recalls. "Instead, it was a combination of things.

"My family situation had changed quite a lot while I was in college," he explains. His father died in 1989 and his two older brothers, Joe and Peter, were left to run the family business in Park Slope, Joe Leopoldi's Hardware, on Fifth Avenue between Seventh and Eighth streets.

"Also, there were a lot of warm feelings and good memories that were drawing me back," he notes, remembering how while growing up all three brothers had worked part time in the store alongside their parents.

"A lot of our friends worked in the store, too. So after I graduated from Brooklyn College, I decided to come home."

With his bachelor's degree in political science, Leopoldi returned to the Brooklyn neighborhood where he had grown up, to join his brothers, who both had business degrees from Baruch College.

Park Slope has undergone many changes over the past few decades, becoming one of New York's trendiest neighborhoods, but Leopoldi's still stands in the middle of a commercial block of small shops and stores that serve a local clientele. Although big-name chain stores have not yet made it to the Leopoldi's block, they are beginning to close in. "We

had Home Depot open up in the neighborhood about ten years ago," says Joe Leopoldi. "Lowe's got here a little later. But we're still here and holding our own. We have a good reputation."

Robert, thirty-eight, and his brothers grew up just around the corner from the hardware store, on Seventh Street. "Our father bought the hardware store at an auction in 1966," he says. "He didn't know anything at all about hardware back then. He was just an independent kind of a guy who was looking for a business that required fewer hours than the candy store and luncheonette he owned before."

To this day Leopoldi's remains an old-fashioned neighborhood hardware emporium. Outside, depending on the season, the brothers display buckets of roofing tar, sheaves of lawn rakes, snow

shovels, and other lawn and yard accoutrements. Inside, the store is a cluttered, homey space with narrow aisles and shelves that reach up to the ceiling. Every flat surface and square inch of vertical wall space is crammed with doodads, gadgets, and all sorts of replacement parts. If you can't find what you're looking for here, one of the brothers or their assistants will find it for you in the pages of one of their dog-eared catalogues. "We can get you whatever you need," Leopoldi says proudly.

The customers who patronize Leopoldi's Hardware these days are a mix of long-time neighborhood residents, newly arrived young couples, and contractors who flood in from opening till closing. "We get a lot of contractors in the store," Leopoldi says. "They don't buy their heavy stuff—beams, cement, and the like—from us, but they come in for the small things—replacement parts, hammers, drills, that sort of thing. They come here because they know we have what they need, and that we'll take care of them quickly. They won't have to stand in any long line."

Despite all the fond memories and ongoing pleasures of operating a successful family business, Robert Leopoldi says that he and his wife, Christa, are not going to insist their three children, Alyson, Gianna, and Robert Vincent, work in the hardware store in their turn, except, perhaps, helping out part time. And college will be part of their children's future, too.

"Oh, sure, they will be going to college," he says. "Education will open up lots of options for them. It was good for my brothers and me. It will be good for my children, too."

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*The Soprano Is a Tenor: At the First Annual President's Concert in spring 2007, held in Whitman Hall, Sopranos star Dominic Chianese, '61, a.k.a. Uncle Junior (accompanied here by Brian Willson from the Conservatory of Music), played guitar, sang, and recited poetry. The hour-long concert also featured works performed by the Brooklyn College Conservatory of Music Choir, Chamber Choir, Orchestra, Brass Ensemble, Opera Theater, and Jazz Ensemble.*

*The Second Annual President's Concert will be hosted by another Sopranos star and BC alumnus, Steve Schirripa, '81, a.k.a. Bobby "Bacala," on Thursday, April 3, at 3:30 p.m. in Whitman Hall.*

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