

Colloquy

ALUMNI QUARTERLY

The GRADUATE SCHOOL of ARTS AND SCIENCES | HARVARD UNIVERSITY

FALL/WINTER 2011

In With the New

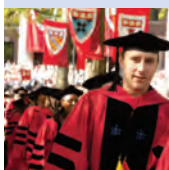
**Jeffrey Schnapp
and the rise of the
digital humanities**





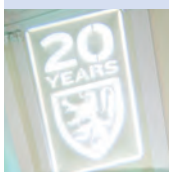
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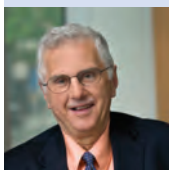
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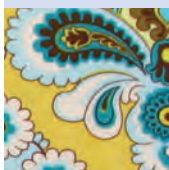
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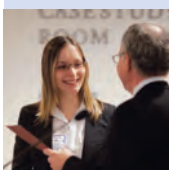
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The Graduate School's highest alumni honor goes to Fields Medal-winning mathematician Heisuke Hironaka, PhD '60; space scientist and former NASA astronaut Jeffrey Alan Hoffman, PhD '71; former Stanford president Richard Wall Lyman, PhD '54; and trailblazing American historian Nell Irvin Painter, PhD '74.



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How the Department of Statistics became a model for outstanding graduate student teaching at Harvard.

Colloquy

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Building a Diverse PhD Program



Allan M. Brandt
Dean, Graduate School of Arts and Sciences; Amalie Moses Kass Professor of the History of Medicine, Harvard Medical School; professor of the history of science, Faculty of Arts and Sciences

Over the last year, the Graduate School has rewritten the playbook for building a diverse PhD program at Harvard — and the early results suggest that the new approaches may form the foundations of significant change.

Beginning with the appointment of Sheila Thomas as Assistant Dean for Diversity and Minority Affairs in the summer of 2010, I and other members of our top administrative team renewed our commitment to enrolling a class of PhD candidates that reflects the diversity of our nation and our world. We worked proactively with key departments to raise their awareness of strategies they might employ to identify and recruit talented minority candidates.

As the 2011–2012 admissions cycle was in full swing, I asked committees in the departments to discuss the best minority candidates in their applicant pool. These conversations proved a useful exercise for identifying critical aspects of the admissions process that bear especially on the applications of students from less well-known institutions. As admissions committees widened their conversations about candidates' qualifications, they began to think more broadly about each aspect of a given application, to consider credentials or experiences that in past years might not have been valued in equal measure with benchmarks like the GRE or a direct familiarity with an undergraduate advisor or institution. Whether or not the conversations yielded different results, they led to thoughtful dialogue about the goals of many of our programs.

These interventions — which included energetic recruitment that focused on personal contact with admitted students — had a positive impact. In the 2011–12 admissions cycle, GSAS admitted the largest number of minority students in recent memory. More important, it successfully recruited the largest number of minority students in the history of GSAS: 48 students (a yield of nearly 70 percent of those admitted) chose to

matriculate (compared with 29 students, or less than 50 percent of those admitted, last year). As a result, nearly 6.5 percent of the 2011–12 class comes from underrepresented minority groups, compared with a typical year's 5 percent.

The numbers, on their face, are modest, and they speak to the complexity of the task at hand. Many talented minority students are drawn to professional graduate programs; others, from the elite undergraduate institutions, form a relatively small pool that is recruited intentionally by peer institutions. Still others come from undergraduate institutions often overlooked by standard admissions processes.

We know that to truly diversify our PhD programs, we must open the pipeline, enlarge the pool, and encourage smart, ambitious students to choose Harvard University. And we must act vigorously to show those students that there is a place for them here.

We're determined to grow and sustain a culture of support and inclusion at GSAS. One of the pillars of such a culture is excellence in mentoring and advising; that's why I'm continuing to dedicate substantial energy to encouraging best practices across our departments. Another pillar is a strong sense of community among students. To that end, I'm happy to report a new vibrancy among our minority student groups; Sheila and others at GSAS are working closely with the W.E.B. Du Bois Society and the Minority Biomedical Scientists at Harvard to foster vibrant networks on both our Cambridge and Boston campuses.

The Graduate School had the most competitive admissions season in its history last year, building a class of 719 new students — 637 PhD candidates and 82 AM candidates — from an initial applicant pool of nearly 12,000. Our gains in diversifying our program were encouraging. But they do not lessen the urgency we feel to make more significant progress going forward. ☞



An Expansive, Plugged-In Vision for the Humanities

By Bari Walsh

As revolutionaries go — and he is one, embracing a dynamic new conception of humanistic research in the digital age — Jeffrey Schnapp is really quite grounded. He's a medievalist, for one thing, a Dante scholar with impeccable credentials and a long track record in all the traditional scholarly forms. And although he founded a collaborative research lab at Harvard to incubate experimental models of knowledge creation and dissemination, he still publishes books, and still uses conventional channels to distribute them.

In short, Schnapp, one of the leading theorists of an emerging set of scholarly practices referred to as the digital humanities, doesn't intend to shock anyone with talk of a book-less, print-less e-future for the academy. Instead, he makes a persuasive case for what he calls a "print-plus" model of inquiry — a model that exploits the power of new analytic and narrative tools, a model in which iterative process, not just outcome, is important, a model in which print is one of many knowledge-sharing media.

Schnapp helped pioneer this new way of thinking about humanistic practice as the founder of the influential Humanities Lab at Stanford, where he held the Pierotti Chair of Italian Studies before moving to Harvard in 2011. Now he is the faculty director of metaLAB at Harvard, a new research engine for the arts and humanities that is housed at the Berkman Center for Internet and Society, a University-wide initiative. He is also a professor of romance languages and literatures and of comparative literature, building productive ties with PhD students across FAS disciplines, who are among metaLAB's co-founders and most active members. Finally, as a cultural historian who has curated art and architecture installations, he is on the teaching faculty at the Graduate School of Design (GSD).

With metaLAB, Schnapp and his collaborators — including co-founders Jesse Shapins, an advanced PhD student in GSAS's interfaculty architecture program with the GSD, and James Burns, who just earned his PhD in economics in 2011 — are building a community of scholars, technologists, artists, journalists,

At metaLAB, Jeffrey Schnapp and a core group of PhD students are building a collaborative space for new approaches to the arts and humanities



and architects who are engaged in a series of experiments in what Schnapp has taken to calling “knowledge design.”

Among their early projects is an evolving effort to model new forms of access to multimedia library collections, a collaboration with Harvard Library Lab and the Digital Public Library of America. The project casts users in a proactive, participatory role, channeling the democratic impulses that drove the public library movement in the 19th century. The tools developed will allow users of Harvard’s digital multimedia collections to annotate and remix those materials and to connect them with other high-quality digital holdings across the web.

Another project is Sensate, a multimedia online journal (www.sensatejournal.com), in which Schnapp and metaLAB co-founder Kara Oehler recently debuted a multimedia, mashed-up teaser for a book he put out this fall called *The Electronic Information Age Book* (Princeton Architectural Press). That book itself studies a mash-up moment from the late 1960s and early 70s, when some writers sought to reconceive the paperback novel for the cybernetic age. The genre’s most famous example is *The Medium is the Message*, an experimental book (and accompanying LP) that was created by Marshall McLuhan, graphic designer Quentin Fiore, and Jerome Agel, who was credited as “producer.”

MetaLAB is also an incubator for projects that extend beyond the Harvard campus. It has been supporting Zeega, an open-source platform for creating interactive documentaries and inventing new forms of storytelling, founded by Shapins, Burns, and Oehler (an independent journalist and a current Radcliffe-Film Study Center Fellow). Zeega, an independent nonprofit, recently secured funding from the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation when it won the highly competitive Knight News Challenge. Like other metaLAB projects, it harnesses the power of digital technology without erecting forbidding technical barriers that might deter producers or users.

MetaLAB members are also involved in launching the Digital Public Library of America, a Berkman Center project funded by the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, and with the cre-

ation of a digital archive of the earthquake and tsunami in Japan (www.jdarchive.org), a project initiated by Harvard’s Reischauer Institute for Japanese Studies.

Schnapp experiences all of this activity, powerfully shaped by the distinctive opportunities that digital tools create, as a balm for what ails the humanities. “For the past half-century, there’s been this rhetoric of crisis that has been a recurring feature of the conversation in the humanities,” he says. “I read that as a symptom, rather than a reflection of the situation of fact. I think if you look at our era from almost any standpoint, even a very conventional standpoint, involving the production of different forms of culture, the consumption of different forms of culture, the level of public participation in cultural institutions, we’re in an extraordinary era, where there’s really been a tremendous democratization of all kinds of forms of knowledge.”

“What I see in this experimental space is the opportunity for reconnecting forms of high-level research and knowledge in arts and humanistic fields to that very big and frankly expanding audience for culture and knowledge.”

But people “in the business of humanities” often feel disconnected from that public realm, Schnapp says. “What I see in this experimental space is the opportunity for reconnecting forms of high-level research and knowledge in arts and humanistic fields to that very big and frankly expanding audience for culture and knowledge.”

In urging that reconnection, he does not espouse a leveling out of achievement, or a generalizing of knowledge, he says. “Where digital humanities and digitally inflected arts practice open up these new horizons is not in the direction of recreating some kind of concept of Renaissance man or Renaissance woman. We live in an era where fields are far too complex. It’s inherent that specialization and expert knowledge are fundamental. But the possibilities for building bigger pictures out of those fragments, those small areas of expert knowledge, particularly with the kinds of digi-

tal tools we have — that for me is the really exciting horizon for people in the arts and humanities today.”

The scholars who affiliate with metaLAB are people who are drawn to “a collaborative, project-driven model of research. That’s just innately how we operate,” says Jesse Shapins, the metaLAB co-founder and Zeega designer. This same ethos is echoed by many of metaLAB’s campus partners, including the Film Study Center, which hosts a newly approved secondary PhD field in Critical Media Practice that allows students to incorporate media-based work into their dissertations.

“One of the core principles of metaLAB was simply that it would be a context in which you would have a group of people who would be working together on projects. It sounds banal, but in a humanities context at a university, it’s actually quite radical. The standard model of scholarship tends to be extraordi-

narily individualized. It doesn’t tend to be very iterative; it doesn’t necessarily operate in public. For us, genuine experimentation — the concept of the lab — seemed very appropriate.”

Although the context may be nontraditional, the motivation is familiar. “Our starting point is always a concept, experience, or set of ideas,” Shapins says. “We don’t start with ‘wouldn’t it be cool if that window could fly and become a hologram.’ We start from a theoretical or cultural base, and then the technology and the media come out of that cultural and theoretical exploration.”

This approach is what drew Burns from his theoretical research in economics into the world of software design and development. “I love making things, and thinking through making,” he says. “As someone with a social science and mathematics background, I love working in close collaboration with humanists



Playing with light at metaLAB's experimental space at 29 Garden Street: Joseph Bergen, a GSD alum who is the lead interaction designer and developer at Zeega; Jesse Shapins, a PhD student and GSD faculty member; and James Burns, PhD '11. Shapins and Burns are co-founders and key drivers of metaLAB and of Zeega.

and artists, testing new theoretical ideas using media in broad contexts that deeply engage multiple publics."

Part of working in an experiment-based setting is embracing the fact that the detours or frustrations inherent in any research process will be public, as they often are in science and engineering settings. This reality, along with the fact that many of the tools driving these new practices are themselves unfamiliar, may fuel skepticism among some humanists who are following from the sidelines. "We're really inventing new genres of what scholarship looks like," Schnapp says. "I think the most powerful thing you can do to bring people along, people who may not be familiar with the tools or may not have worked with them, is to create models that they can actually engage with."

But becoming comfortable with the unknown — becoming less risk-averse, as Schnapp puts it — is a challenging proposition. "If you're doing a piece of research in an

archive and writing an essay, we have a very clear understanding of what an essay means, what it looks like," he says. "That's not so clear when you're working in an experimental genre like database documentaries, which are multilinear. What is a multilinear narrative? What is a good one?"

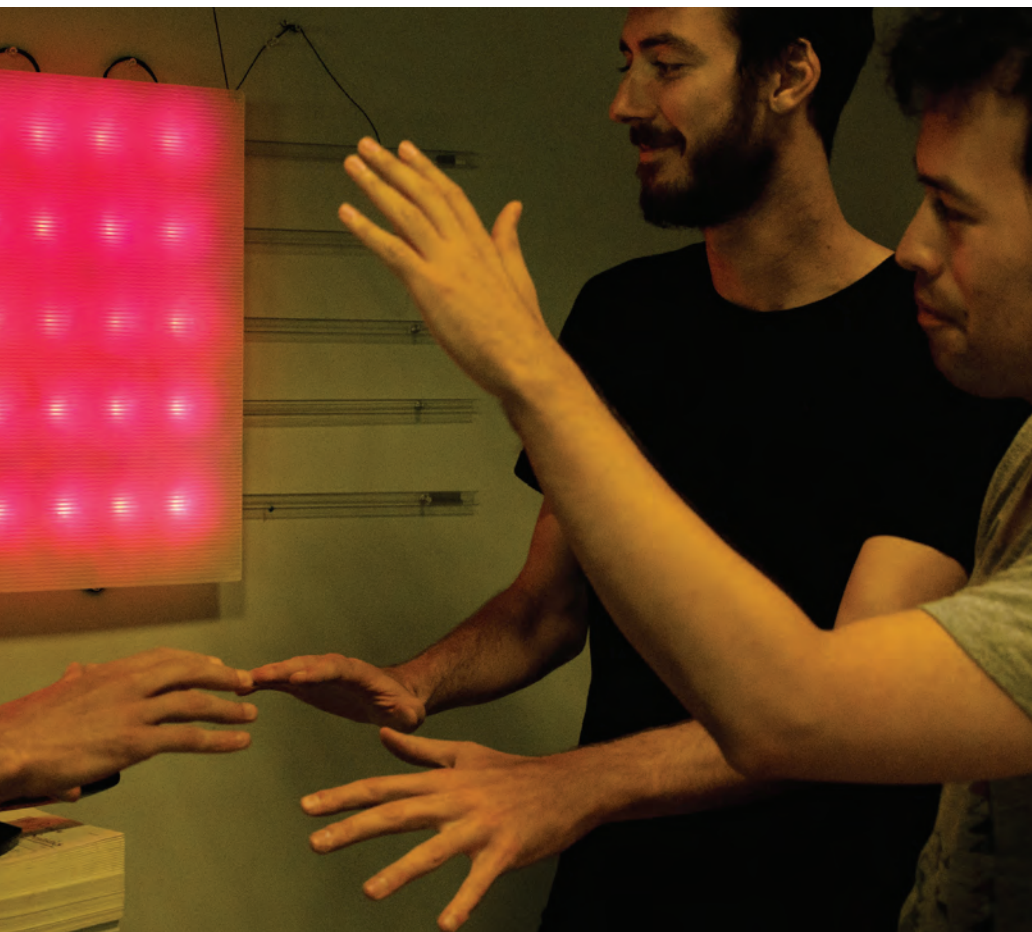
And then there are questions of authorship and recognition, which is where this new work may bump up most noticeably against standard protocol in humanistic scholarship. "To work in this realm is to begin to open the door to this more iterative concept of what learning and knowledge are," Schnapp says. "Which means a more open-ended model, both in terms of where things start and end, but also in the sense of being participatory. Many digital projects in the humanities are really cumulative projects."

These questions "will only become more challenging for PhD programs," says Shapins, "but in a good way. Programs will have to think through and come to terms with the fact

that work that will be done in PhD programs will not be exclusively individual, and that there should be modes of recognizing and supporting that."

These are concepts that may not seem alien once current and recent undergraduates come into the academy, especially as job postings in the digital humanities expand. In his own teaching, Schnapp explores ideas of how "the classroom can become a place where knowledge is produced, literally — where student projects are cumulative. It's the idea that a database of all the student papers from a class becomes a kind of patrimony that travels from one version of a class to the next. So students are developing research projects that are shared with future generations of students that they will never know."

He cites a Stanford course in which, a decade ago, undergraduates began to write micro-histories of video games and other forms of interactive media. Over the ensuing years, that trove of papers has continued to grow, and now "it's by far the biggest resource in the historiography of interactive media," he



says. “There are books on that subject, but none of them have anywhere near the depth of knowledge that has been produced by undergraduates. But is it a publication in the conventional sense? No.”

Shapins, who is on the faculty of architecture at the Graduate School of Design, also explores new methods of knowledge building in his own teaching. Last year, working with collaborators who included Burns and faculty members Lucien Castaing-Taylor and Ernst Karel, he developed an inventive new Harvard course called Media Archaeology of Place (see the syllabus at www.mediaarchaeologyofplace.org), cross-listed in the FAS departments of Visual and Environmental Studies and Anthropology and in the GSD. The assignments included readings that dealt with the major intellectual and cultural questions at hand, Shapins says, “but as opposed to a weekly response paper or a final research paper, all of the student research was built around evolving multimedia projects. Each student was assigned to find an area of Boston that they’d focus on for the semester, look for archival

representations of that place, and invent their own new multimedia projects out of those archival assets, also using their own recordings.”

The class was small, but the student response was strongly positive. “You have the feeling that you’re part of something new and exciting,” Shapins says — “because you are.”

But for all that is new, Schnapp argues, these approaches propose no significant discontinuity from traditional humanistic goals. “There’s so much hype around the tools,” he says. “But tools never answer the fundamental questions about what is an interesting research problem and what is a trivial research problem.

“We’re at an incredibly early moment in this history. I think it’s a really exciting moment, but I think we also need to understand that the fundamental stakes of what is interesting versus trivial knowledge, what is quality versus poor scholarship — these questions are abiding questions, and they remain just as operative in terms of looking at digital humanities as they do in traditional work.”

Applied Mathematics

David Keyes, PhD ’84, has received the “Distinguished Service” prize from the Society for Industrial and Applied Mathematics (SIAM). Keyes is recognized as a spokesman for the role of large-scale simulation in scientific discovery and is editor or co-author of more than a dozen federal agency reports on computational science and engineering. He currently serves as the founding dean of the Division of Mathematical and Computer Sciences and Engineering at the King Abdullah University of Science and Technology (KAUST) in Saudi Arabia, launched in 2009.

Applied Sciences

James Livingston, PhD ’56, has published a new book in which he recounts the 1896 murder trial of his cousin Mary Alice Livingston. In *Arsenic and Clam Chowder* (State University of New York Press, Albany, 2010) he relates how Mary Alice, the black sheep in a prominent New York family, was accused of the murder of her mother. Livingston’s scientific career has included a lengthy tenure at General Electric as a research physicist and at MIT as a professor in the Department of Materials Science and Engineering.

English

Stephen Sandy, PhD ’63, has recently published his twelfth collection of poetry, *Overlook* (Louisiana State University Press, 2010), which the poet Richard Wilbur praised as “masterly and absorbing.” Over a career that included faculty positions at Boston University, Bennington College, and Brown University, Sandy has received, among other honors, a residency at the Bellagio Center, a Lannan Senior Fellowship at the Fine Arts Work Center in Provincetown, a Fulbright Lectureship in Japan, and an award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters.

Economics

Rex Ghosh, AB ’85, PhD ’89, is an international economist who has written his first novel, centered on the global financial crisis. *Nineteenth Street* (Greenleaf Book Group, LLC, 2010) is a thriller that imagines an act of terrorism that ignites a financial crisis on the global scale. Ghosh has lectured at Princeton and Georgetown, and for over 20 years, he has worked in the financial markets, most recently as Division Chief in the International Monetary Fund Research Department.

Film and Visual Studies

Carl Chiarenza, PhD ’73, exhibited his photography at the Walter N. Marks Center for the Arts in Palm Desert, CA, from February 22–March 31, 2011. The exhibition, *Pictures Come From Pictures*, was based on his small-format book of the

The 360th Commencement

The Graduate School of Arts and Sciences conferred 359 PhDs and 68 master's degrees at its Diploma Awarding Ceremony on a warm, summer-like Commencement Day, May 26, in Sanders Theatre.

The day kicked off as usual with an early-morning, traffic-stopping procession down Oxford Street to Sever Quadrangle, as GSAS Commencement marshals — led by bagpipers — proudly carried the flags of the Graduate School, the School of Engineering and Applied Sciences, and Dudley House into Harvard Yard. 𐄂



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Photographs by Martha Stewart

1 GSAS degree candidates made their traditional early-morning march down Oxford Street, led by the 2011 Commencement marshals.

2 Evita Grant, who received her PhD in applied sciences, gathers with her family, diploma in hand.

3 FAS Dean Mike Smith presents a miniature diploma to the daughter of a PhD candidate, as Harvard faculty look on. Awarding diplomas to children of graduating students

has long been part of the Graduate School's Sanders Theatre tradition.

4 Sanders Theatre makes a grand setting for the GSAS Diploma Awarding Ceremony.

5 Commencement marshals Sarah Wagner-McCoy and Jean-François Charles

A 20th Anniversary

The main dining room at Dudley House was decked out and filled to capacity on October 27 as President Drew Faust joined House Masters Jim and Doreen Hogle and legions of GSAS students — along with FAS Dean Mike Smith, GSAS Dean Allan Brandt, and Harvard College Dean Evelyn Hammonds — to celebrate the 20th anniversary of Dudley's dedication as the graduate student center at GSAS.

Many members of the Graduate School's Alumni Council were also in attendance — appropriately so, since GSAS alumni, including some current Council members, were central to the effort to dedicate the House in 1991 as a space for GSAS students to form connections across disciplines and pursue interests beyond the lab or library. 🛡️



1 Dudley House was transformed for the celebration, which drew hundreds of students.

2 From left, former Dudley Fellow Jennie Song, Dudley House administrator Susan Zawalich, and former Dudley Fellow Glenn Magid, now an assistant dean of advising at Harvard College.

3 Harvard President Drew Faust and GSAS Dean Allan Brandt

4 Dudley Fellow Florin-Stefan Morar, PhD candidate in history of science, and Alumni Council member Stan Hales, PhD '70, mathematics.

5 Partygoers Tenesoya Martin de la Nuez and Antonio Jose Arraiza Rivera (both PhD candidates in romance languages and literatures) got to create artful Dudley keepsakes at a photo booth in the lobby.

6 Yellow and green (the colors of Dudley's shield) were the order of the day at a candy table featuring sweets of all variety.

col·lo·quy: a conversation, a dialogue

... with Bruce Alberts | Making a Science of Education

By Bari Walsh

Bruce Alberts, AB '60, PhD '66, is the editor in chief of *Science* and a former two-term president of the National Academy of Sciences. Now Professor Emeritus of Biochemistry and Biophysics at the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF), he is one of the authors of *The Molecular Biology of the Cell*, a standard university textbook in its fifth edition. He is also one of the first three science envoys appointed by President Barack Obama to engage with Muslim-majority countries on issues of science and technology. For all his global impact, however, Alberts spends a considerable portion of his time thinking very locally — thinking about what happens in a middle-school science classroom in Boston, for instance. He's committed to improving the quality of science and mathematics education in American schools, spearheading initiatives that reward a more robust partnership between academia and on-the-ground reform efforts, and then exploring the research and policy implications in the pages of *Science*. He spoke to *Colloquy* about his current interests.

Talk about your involvement in science education reform at the elementary and middle school levels.

I think of it as making a science of education: Using evidence and continuous feedback about what happens to students in our education system at all levels, and trying to build a continuously improving education system from that evidence. We're very far away from that type of model now.

K–12 education in the United States is mired in politics. No Child Left Behind, for example, started out with a reasonable idea — to introduce accountability — but it ended up distorting the entire system, and we kept with it for more than a decade because politicians can't admit that they don't do things perfectly the first time.

The world of education is very complicated — it's at least as complicated as biology. But as scientists we would never think of saying, well this is the way that the cell works, and we're going to prove it. Instead, we would say, this is our best guess as to how to do something — in this case, improve education

— and what we're going to do is to introduce along with any policy a serious research process that finds out exactly what happens when this policy is applied.

Say more about this scientific approach to education reform.

When I was at the Academy, from 1993 to 2005, we did a lot of work on the science of education, and the first product was a book, *How People Learn: Brain, Mind, Experience, and School* (National Academies Press, 1999, 2000). We were asking: What do we know from the research done in psychology departments about how people learn, what is its applicability to schools, and how should this change the way we think about teaching and learning? *How People Learn* was enormously successful, and it is now used widely in teacher preparation courses and in designing curricula.

But we also tried to do something much broader, which was to ask the question, Why is knowledge from research used to continually improve agriculture and medicine, for example, but not used to continuously improve education?

The committees charged with answering this question found that educational research is not very effectively used in our K–12 schools in large part because we don't do the research in the schools. We do it in lab settings and don't take into account the complications in real schools — the way schools operate, the conditions within a school. We need to lower the barriers between the research community and schools.

The committees proposed an initiative called the Strategic Education Research Partnership (SERP), an effort for which I presently serve as board chair. SERP develops productive collaborations among educators, researchers, developers, and policy makers. It establishes field sites — school districts that enter into long-term partnerships with SERP researchers — that identify problems and test programs aimed at addressing them in classrooms. Boston was the first field site, under the direction of a distinguished Harvard professor, Catherine Snow [the Patricia Albjerg Graham Professor of Education].



Bruce Alberts, AB '60, PhD '66

When did you first see that science education needed improvement?

It first became glaringly obvious when my wife became PTA president in the public school system in San Francisco in the early 1980s. She spoke at every school board meeting, and they were broadcast on the radio — and since she was speaking, I had to listen. And I realized how divorced our school board was in San Francisco from the serious issues of teaching and learning.

I also realized that the San Francisco school system — where all my kids went to school — was like the developing world with regard to resources available for science. And here was UCSF, a very wealthy and advanced entity, in the middle of this deprived world of the schools. So we started a massive Science and Health Education partnership — originally it was to transfer equipment we were getting rid of to teachers, but it ended up being much more. Now we send some 300 graduate students and postdocs into the schools as volunteers every year.

How does the US stack up these days against other countries?

I just came back from China, and you can't help but notice the kind of investments they are making in their future. Long-term investments in education, building huge new campuses for their universities, investing huge amounts in science and technology. My major political goal would be to get more leaders of Congress over to China to see what they're doing. They have no idea.

Describe your role as one of the President's science envoys.

Six of us have been appointed to work with Muslim-majority nations, and I was assigned to Indonesia and Pakistan. I've spent the majority of my time thus far in Indonesia.

One of the things I discovered is that there is essentially no merit-based competition for scientific research funds in Indonesia. Their investments in science are relatively small, and the funds are all given out to institutions to redistribute, so the best young people have no opportunities to show what they can do. The result is a collaboration with the World Bank in Jakarta to help Indonesia develop a National Science Foundation-like granting system that will reward excellence and help develop a merit-based system with regard to who gets resources in Indonesian sciences.

We're just at the beginning stages, but the US has helped many countries set up merit-based funding systems, including in China and Mexico, so this isn't the first time.

The other major program I started in Indonesia is called Frontiers of Science. It's part of a program that brings together 40 of the best young scientists in the US with their contemporaries in a partner country at an annual symposium. The idea is to create personal ties of trust and collaboration, using science and engineering, that hopefully will help stabilize the world, if we can get enough of it going.

In 1998, I attended the second China-US Frontiers of Science. One of the leaders on the Chinese side, Chen Zhu, is now the minister of health in China. Every time I go to China, I have breakfast or dinner with Chen Zhu and

see how he's doing. This is the point: Future leaders get to know each other and develop a realistic approach to the other country, not based on fear or competition.

What has it been like to move from scientist to advocate?

Most scientists are advocates, they just have no time to advocate. And they also don't have much broad exposure to what science can do in the world. My 12 years in the Academy took me all over the world, to remote places in Africa, to rural Indian villages — places where I could see that thanks to the efforts of local scientists, there had been a huge difference in the life trajectories of poor people.

So I talk about the opportunities — as I just did in China — to spread the benefits of science to a much broader range of people. Of course, when you say that, you're not talking about the same kind of science you do in the chemistry labs at Harvard. You're talking about the science that creates food for people who are used to starving every year during short-ages in Africa, or you're talking about trying to bring enterprises to rural villages in India that are based on science, like growing mushrooms, building dairies, or making biopesticides.

You speak of the importance of promoting the tolerance and openness of science. What do you mean?

Well, the whole enterprise of science is pretty amazing. It's an agreement between people that 'I will honestly report what I find and show you how I did it, so that you can then build on my work and check it.' Science is a very cooperative enterprise. It absolutely relies on honesty. You have to have high moral standards, and you have to punish people who are dishonest, and you have to reward cooperation — otherwise it doesn't work. The values of science — reliance on evidence, and rational analyses from evidence — are critical for democracies. And if you look at our political systems, we need that more than ever in all nations, including the United States. ☞

same name (D.R. Godine Publisher, Boston, 2008). Chiarenza is the Fanny Knapp Allen Professor Emeritus of Art History and Artist-in-Residence at the University of Rochester.

History

Abbott Gleason, AB '60, PhD '69, has written a memoir called *A Liberal Education* (Tidepool Press, 2010), which recounts his upbringing on the streets of Cambridge, MA, in the late 1930s through his university years at Harvard. Gleason taught at Brown University for many years and continues to reside in Providence, RI.

Peter Wood, AB '64, PhD '72, discusses the American painter Winslow Homer's early work *Near Andersonville* in his book, *Near Andersonville: Winslow Homer's Civil War* (Harvard University Press, 2010). Relatively unknown for over a century, Homer's painting depicts an enslaved black woman during the Civil War and is now widely recognized as one of the first significant works to present this perspective. Wood is professor emeritus of history at Duke University.

History of Science

Arvind Venkat, AB '96, AM '96, GSA '97, is the editor of a new emergency medicine textbook entitled *Challenging and Emerging Conditions in Emergency Medicine* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2011). The book focuses on changes in emergency medicine practice due to improvements in longevity, novel medical and surgical treatments, and societal expectations. Venkat is the director of research in the Department of Emergency Medicine and an ethics consultant at the Allegheny General Hospital.

Medical Sciences

Carlos A. Suarez-Quian, PhD '81, recently published the *Online Guided Gross Anatomy Dissector* (www.onlinedissector.com; Sinauer Associates, Inc., 2011). The so-called Suarez Dissector is a multimedia platform that provides instructions for cadaveric dissection, with over 2,000 photographic images and nearly six hours of video. Suarez-Quian is a professor of gross anatomy at Georgetown University Medical Center.

Sociology

Martha N. Beck, AB '85, PhD '94, is a prominent life coach and author, most recently, of *Steering by Starlight: Find Your Right Life, No Matter What!* (Rodale, Inc., 2008). As a frequent contributor to such publications as *Real Simple*, *Redbook*, and *O, the Oprah Magazine*, Beck specializes in helping people create meaningful and fulfilling lives.

2011 Centennial Medals Honoring Excellence



The Graduate School celebrates the lasting impact of four outstanding alumni

Each year, the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences honors a select group of Harvard University's most accomplished alumni by awarding the Centennial Medal. First bestowed in June of 1989, on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Graduate School, the Centennial Medal recognizes alumni for their significant and lasting contributions to knowledge, to their disciplines, and to society at large.

The 2011 medal was awarded on May 25, in a ceremony at the Harvard Faculty Club, to a leading international scholar in mathematics, a well-traveled space scientist, a former university president who epitomizes grace under fire, and a historian who paints America's past in vivid strokes.

Solving the Big Problems

Heisuke Hironaka, PhD '60, mathematics

Heisuke Hironaka is that rare scholar whose professional successes are made up almost equally of groundbreaking discoveries in his field and tangible work to bring the excitement of such discoveries to life for younger generations.

Photographs by Martha Stewart

A mathematician who trained under Harvard's influential Oscar Zariski, Hironaka went on to become one of the leading algebraic geometers of his time. He rose to fame in 1964 for his work on the "resolution of singularities," one of the most fundamental, and most difficult, problems in mathematics. In recognition of his achievement in solving this long-unsolvable problem, he received the Fields Medal, often called the Nobel Prize of mathematics, in 1970.

After taking up appointments at Brandeis and Columbia, Hironaka joined the Harvard Mathematics Department in 1968. Beginning in 1975, he assumed a joint professorship at Kyoto University, and he later became director of the Research Institute for Mathematical Sciences in Kyoto. From 1996 to 2002, he was president of Yamaguchi University, returning to the prefecture where he was born.

Hironaka became a celebrity in Japan after he was presented with the Order of Culture Award by the Emperor in 1975. He went on to write or co-write 26 popular books on science, education, creative thinking, and mathematics; he has been consistently dedicated to encouraging interest in mathematics among young people. In 1980, he started a summer seminar for high school students, and later added one for Japanese and American college students, and he founded the Japanese Association of Mathematical Sciences to support graduate study and research abroad by Japanese mathematicians. According to Shing-Tung Yau, the chair of Harvard's Mathematics Department, Hironaka's fundraising efforts on behalf of the association, which even included TV commercials, resulted in major support from corporations such as Mitsubishi and Fuji, and eventually the Japanese government.

"In the 1980s there were few domestic grant opportunities for foreign travel or exchange," says Yau. "Today, one can see the fruits of Hironaka's efforts in the number of former JAMS fellows who have become professors of mathematics across the United States and Japan." Beyond his accomplishments, there is the joy Hironaka takes in mathematics. He once told an interviewer of the pleasure he found in counting — in simply counting numbers and comparing them. And he has said that his attraction to the singularities problem had all the logic, and ultimately all the mystery, of "a boy falling in love with a girl."

Trailblazing in the Next Frontier

Jeffrey Alan Hoffman, PhD '71, astrophysics

To say that Jeffrey Hoffman has traveled far since his days as a graduate student at Harvard would be a gross understatement. To be more exact, he has traveled more than 21.5 million miles, as an astronaut on five Space Shuttle missions. Along the way he rescued one of astronomy's most important assets and brought alive the excitement of space exploration to several generations of impatiently earthbound students.

Between 1978, when he was part of the first group of astronauts chosen for NASA's new Shuttle program, and 1997, when he retired from the astronaut corps to become NASA's European representative, Hoffman logged more than 1,200 hours in space. He made the first contingency spacewalk of the Space Shuttle era in 1985, attaching a "fly-swatter" device to the Shuttle's robot arm in an attempt to rescue a wayward satellite. He flew a dedicated astronomy mission in December 1992, on board Columbia. He was the payload commander for the first flight of the Tethered Satellite System in July 1992, and he flew again for the Tethered Satellite relaunch in 1996.

But his most important mission came in 1993. "The entire astronomical community will always be indebted to Jeff Hoffman for his principal role in the correction of the optical system of the Hubble Space



Heisuke Hironaka

HEISUKE HIRONAKA, PHD '60, MATHEMATICS

For answering the important questions in mathematics, for enabling countless scholars to pursue mathematical research at the highest levels, and for helping to spread the pure joys of mathematics to younger generations around the world.



Jeffrey Hoffman

Telescope,” says Giovanni Fazio, a senior physicist at the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory and a lecturer in the Astronomy Department. “After that very successful repair,” Fazio continues, “observations made by the Hubble Space Telescope have revolutionized our view of the universe.”

Hoffman’s knack for reaching the highest heights first showed itself in his dissertation project, when, in the early days of gamma-ray astronomy, he built a cosmic gamma-ray detector that was flown from a very-high-altitude balloon over Argentina. Now, as Professor of the Practice of Aerospace Engineering in the Department of Aeronautics and Astronautics, his curriculum is full of similar flights of fancy — and unparalleled opportunities for students.

“In the 50 years since the Mercury astronauts were selected, the nature of ‘The Right Stuff’ has changed,” says Hoffman’s colleague and friend Laurence R. Young, the Apollo Program Professor of Aeronautics and Astronautics at MIT. The astronaut ideal has shifted from “the macho test pilot to the highly skilled space scientist who could fix anything — even in the vacuum of space, 250 miles above the surface of the Earth,” Young continues. “Jeff Hoffman is the epitome of this new breed of astronaut.”

JEFFREY ALAN HOFFMAN, PHD ’71, ASTROPHYSICS

For helping to open our eyes to the wonders of space travel, for daring rescue missions that pushed the horizons of our knowledge of the universe, and for training younger generations to play leading roles in future voyages of discovery, we honor you today.



Richard Lyman

RICHARD WALL LYMAN, PHD ’54, HISTORY

For courageous institutional leadership during a tumultuous time in US history, for a commitment to the core principles of higher education, and for expanding our understanding of how universities can connect scholars across disciplines for the benefit of society.

Leadership in Crisis and in Calm

Richard Wall Lyman, PhD ’54, history

When Richard Lyman arrived at Stanford as an associate professor of history in 1958, *Stanford Magazine* recalls, the pastoral setting and sleepy campus prompted a colleague to comment that anyone in search of intellectual excitement would have to travel 50 miles to Berkeley.

By the time Lyman became Stanford’s provost, in 1967, and president, in 1970, that tranquility was a thing of the past. He was confronted with some of the most contentious campus protests of a volatile era, as student activists rose up against the Vietnam War, military research activities, and University governance. At a critical moment in 1969, when students had occupied Stanford’s Encina Hall, which housed sensitive student records, Lyman was forced to call in the police. As he recounts in his recent memoir, *Stanford in Turmoil*, one night rocks flew through the windows of his campus home, a room away from his sleeping daughter.

Through it all, Lyman remained steady and strong, willing to make hard choices, confident in the conviction that Stanford must recover and prosper. And so it did.

“His capacity to deal with episodes that involved confrontation, threat, and abusive language was a remarkable triumph of patience and reason,” says Donald Kennedy, a fellow Harvard PhD who succeeded Lyman as president of Stanford in 1980, when Lyman left to become president of the Rockefeller Foundation, a position he held until 1988. Kennedy goes on: “I will always be grateful that he left me the lightened load of inheriting a campus where conscientious but civil dispute could flourish in an environment supporting commitments to serious work in scholarship.”



It is Lyman's commitment to the academic business of the University — easy to overlook in the turmoil of the times — that many of his colleagues most prize. He led Stanford through a dramatic growth in academic prominence, and when new interdisciplinary programs were just arising. Walter Falcon, who succeeded him as director of Stanford's Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies in 1991 (and who also holds a Harvard PhD), praises Lyman's "integrity, his Maine-like common sense and humor, his personal empathy combined with his analytic toughness, and his sense of history. Many Stanford colleagues remember Dick primarily for his firm guidance of the University during the chaos of the early 1970s. I remember him most for the role he played in removing barricades of a different sort — the walls around departments and schools — thereby facilitating new forms of interdepartmental research and teaching."

Painting US History in Vivid Hues Nell Irvin Painter, PhD '74, history

As a historian, teacher, cultural critic, and now in a budding career as an artist, Nell Irvin Painter has approached the world around her with an uncommon empathy and a gift for bold strokes.

Her instinct has been to value and connect the experiences of those historically undervalued actors in our American narrative: black people, native people, women, working people, and poor people. Her inclusivity — her commitment to the stories of everyday people — has been courageous, groundbreaking, and sometimes controversial. Most important, it has led to the creation of a new way of doing history—one that, through the students she has mentored, has imprinted itself on historical scholarship everywhere.

Painter is the Edwards Professor of American History, Emerita, at Princeton University, where she was the director of the Program in African American Studies from 1997 to 2000. Her books include *Creating Black Americans* (Oxford University Press, 2006) and *Southern History Across the Color Line* (University of North Carolina Press, 2002). Her newest book, *The History of White People* (W. W. Norton), was published in March 2010 and has just appeared in paperback. Her prominence was recognized in her selection as president of the Southern Historical Association for 2007 and as president of the Organization of American Historians for 2007–08.

"Where historians are taught to build by tearing down, Nell Painter has always exemplified an alternative model," says one of her former doctoral advisees, Walter Johnson, now the Winthrop Professor of History and Professor of African and African American Studies at Harvard. "Her scholarship and teaching are characterized by a sort of everyday veneration: for the scholars like W. E. B. Du Bois, Carter Woodson, and Herbert Guman who pointed the way in black history; for the slaves, the coal miners, and the caretakers whose labor built the United States; for the communists, the convicts, and lonely visionaries who bore the stigma of wanting it to be a better, brighter, more humane place."

Now Painter is shaping a new legacy, having just received an MFA from the Rhode Island School of Design. Her decision to launch this new chapter — she earned a BFA degree in painting from Rutgers in 2009 — seems to manifest the same embrace of possibilities, and the same openness to risk and experimentation, that has defined her historical approach over the decades of her first career. 🎨



Nell Painter

NELL IRVIN PAINTER, PHD '74, HISTORY

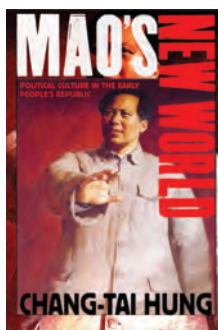
For writing history that values and connects the experiences of all Americans, for showing the influence of the marginalized on our national narrative, and for changing the practice of historical scholarship through influential mentoring.

ALUMNI BOOKS

**Roosevelt's Purge**

(Belknap Press, 2010) by **Susan Dunn** (PhD '73, romance languages and literatures) combines taut historical close-up and sweeping overview. Dunn focuses on President Franklin Roosevelt's effort

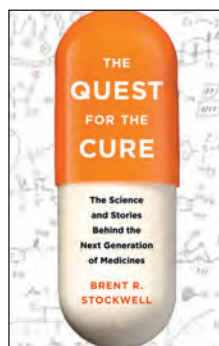
to defeat Southern incumbents in the 1938 Congressional primaries. Sharply drawn characters, including Josephus Daniels and the tart Harold Ickes, enliven her account. The ill-fated purge reflected, in part, Roosevelt's frustration over conservative Southern hostility to his domestic agenda and, in part, his desire to realign the two parties into greater ideological coherence, liberals versus conservatives. Though Roosevelt failed, Dunn continues, realignment ultimately did take place, and we live with the consequences. Her concluding chapter and epilogue weigh the cost, including partisan gridlock, an inability to compromise, and political animosities rivaling those of the late antebellum years.

**Mao's New World**

(Cornell University Press, 2011) examines early Chinese Communist Party (CCP) efforts to shape China's political culture. Influenced by anthropologist Clifford Geertz, **Chang-tai Hung**

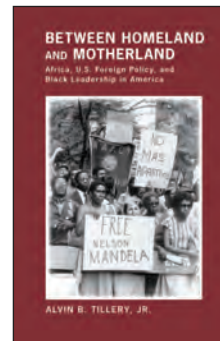
(PhD '81, East Asian history) analyzes CCP attempts to instill socialist values through monumental public spaces (exemplified by Tiananmen Square), patriotic parades, the remaking of

traditional dance forms (particularly the rural *yangge*, or rice-sprout dance) into colorful paeans to the Chinese Revolution, and control over the visual arts and historical representations (in museums and tributes to "Red martyrs"). Hung also notes the indifferent success that attended this heavy-handed, top-down program. Thus, as *yangge* devolved into political cliché, it lost its audience, and certain patriotic paintings resembled palimpsests, with leaders added or removed according to their political fortunes.



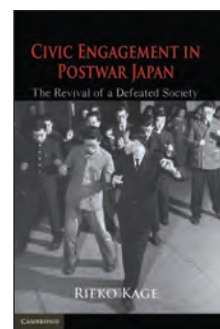
"There is a shortage of new medicines," warns **Brent Stockwell** (PhD '99, chemistry and chemical biology) in his absorbing new book **The Quest for the Cure** (Columbia University Press, 2011). Indeed,

Stockwell reports, the annual total of FDA-approved new medications has dropped by 50% since 2000. In explaining how we have reached this worrisome state, Stockwell interweaves science and history to conjure 150 years of drug-based medicine and bring to life the researchers responsible for aspirin, morphine, chemotherapy, and HIV protease inhibitors. These stories left me eager for more — for example, on antibiotics and bacterial resistance (to penicillin and other drugs) and psychiatric medications for treating depression, bipolar disorder, and schizophrenia. Besides explaining how we've gotten stuck, Stockwell discusses the new technologies and approaches that hold the greatest promise of producing the next generation of medicines.

**Between Homeland and Motherland**

(Cornell University Press, 2011) is a political science analysis of the African American elite, probing the role of black politicians, activists, and intellectuals in shaping America's — especial-

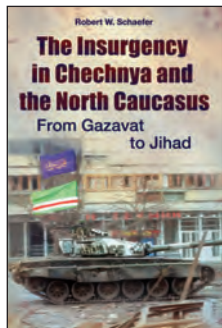
ly black America's — connection with Africa. **Alvin Tillery Jr.** (PhD '01, government) underscores this elite's ambivalence — seen, for example, in its support for the independence of Liberia (though not for nineteenth-century black appeals to emigrate there), as well as in elite opposition (during the 1920s) to Marcus Garvey's back-to-Africa movement, Cold War-era adjustments to the NAACP's stance on African colonialism, and the Congressional Black Caucus's shifting prominence in the struggle for sanctions against South Africa. Tillery concludes that elite identification with Africa isn't straightforward: it's conditioned by domestic factors, including constituent concerns and institutional needs.



Current social science theory suggests that civic engagement diminishes in a society defeated in war. But **Civic Engagement in Postwar Japan** (Cambridge University Press, 2011) argues that the opposite may be true. In this slender,

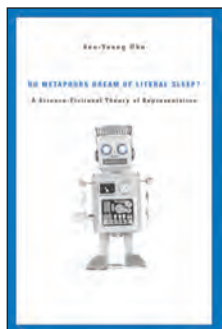
important volume, **Rieko Kage** (PhD '05, government) explores the surge in political and voluntary activism that followed Japan's devastat-

ing, demoralizing defeat in World War II. What accounts for this civic activism? Kage reviews traditional explanations — including the impact of America's postwar occupation and Japan's booming economy — but finds them wanting. (Americans didn't force activism on the Japanese, and civic engagement long predated the Japanese boom.) Instead, she stresses the role of wartime mobilization itself, which even in undemocratic states encourages citizen engagement in collective endeavors, paradoxically inculcating valuable civic skills.



Lt. Col. Robert Schaefer (AM '05, regional studies—Russia, Eastern Europe, and Central Asia) is an expert on counterinsurgency. In **The Insurgency in Chechnya and the North Caucasus**,

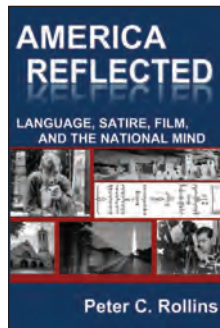
he offers a thoughtful account of the simmering Islamist insurgency in the North Caucasus. But this book is far more than a dissection of recent events. Schaefer carefully grounds his narrative in the region's deep history. Besides their Islamic faith, Chechens have a proud warrior tradition (based in part on having fought so many intruders — Roman, Mongol, Russian, Soviet). Schaefer also provides a useful discussion and explication of terrorism/counterterrorism and insurgency/counterinsurgency. Terrorism (the use of violent tactics to instill fear) and insurgencies (efforts to change governmental authority — which may, or may not, include terrorism) shouldn't be conflated, he argues, and require distinct and different responses.



Science fiction has attracted a highly devoted following but little in the way of scholarly attention. **Seo-Young Chu** (PhD '07, English) aims to change that. In **Do Metaphors Dream of Literal Sleep?** (Harvard University

Press, 2010), Chu plumbs the complexities of

representation, or mimesis (how narratives create their fictional worlds), within science fiction. She also seeks to broaden its boundaries, viewing fantasy, gothic/horror, and even detective fiction as subsets of science fiction. With an impressive command of the science fiction literature, Chu demonstrates that literary analysis can wrest no less valuable insights here than in other, more “serious” realms. But general fans of the genre may prefer to skip the book's theoretical introduction and begin directly with its substantive chapters.



Neither an autobiography nor a volume of collected essays, **America Reflected** (New Academia Publishers, 2010) is a summation of the career of **Peter Rollins** (AB '63, PhD '72, history of American civilization).

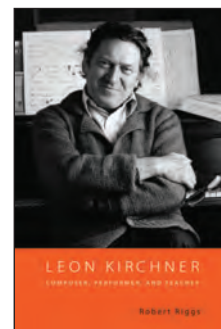
Rollins shares reminiscences and longstanding scholarly concerns, making readers feel as if they're having a great conversation with this interpreter of American culture while skipping stones across a pond. Major sections of the work address humorist Will Rogers and Rollins's work in film studies, particularly his war films. But Rollins introduces a varied cast of characters, including the iconoclastic linguist Benjamin Whorf, poet Amy Lowell, naturalist John James Audubon, and author Harriet Beecher Stowe. Undergirding these essays is Rollins's longstanding focus on American values and their tensile strength under stress.



Rising Force (Harvard University Press, 2011) is a lively introduction to something that will seem the stuff of fantasy to many: magnetic levitation, known here as maglev. **James Livingston** (PhD '56, applied physics)

enlists Mary Poppins, Harry Potter, balloons, and floating in saltwater to explain relevant principles and invoke our dreams of besting gravity. A long-

time GE physicist who's also written on feminist social reformer Martha Wright (Lucretia Mott's younger sister), Livingston describes maglev applications, practical and oddball. (With powerful electromagnets, physicist Andre Geim successfully levitated a live frog.) Applications range from frictionless bearings to artificial hearts (for example, Levacor); best known, of course, are maglev trains, like the one in China that reaches 250 miles per hour. But for Livingston, science is more than discovery and application: it's also about the transformative possibilities of creativity and fun.



Leon Kirchner (University of Rochester Press, 2010) is the first full-length biography of the noted American composer, who died in 2009. **Robert Riggs** (PhD '87, music) meticulously recounts Kirchner's

life and career, including his long stint (1961–91) at Harvard. Musically, Kirchner avoided both excessive deference to the past and jarring departure into the new. Though a student of Schoenberg, he didn't employ Schoenberg's twelve-tone approach. And while Aaron Copland was an ardent early supporter, Kirchner avoided both Copland's populist embrace of folk music themes and his later turn to serialism. Kirchner's social network was broad, as this biography brings to life — including not only fellow composers (including Stravinsky) but also philosopher Theodor Adorno, journalist Marguerite Higgins, and comedian Carl Reiner, among others. His simple, though demanding, credo: an artist must “create a personal cosmos, a verdant world in continuity with tradition . . . powered by conviction and necessity.”

Reviews by James Clyde Sellman, PhD '93, history

Alumni authors: Would you like your book (general interest, published within the past year) considered for inclusion? Send it to *Colloquy*, Harvard Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, Holyoke Center 350, 1350 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, MA 02138. Question? E-mail gsaa@fas.harvard.edu.

Danny Ng



From left, Michael Enright, Chih Cheung, and Victor Fung

GLOBAL GSAS: HONG KONG

The Graduate School Alumni Association made its Hong Kong debut on September 7, 2011, welcoming regional Harvard alumni with two exciting gatherings exploring the rise of China and the role of Hong Kong.

The first event, a luncheon for GSAS alumni at the Conrad Hotel, was hosted by GSAS Dean Allan Brandt and **Lee Zhang, AM '01**, the chairman and CEO of iKang Guobin Healthcare Group. It featured a provocative panel discussion moderated by **John Fan, PhD '72**, chairman and founder of Kopin Corporation, with **Victor K. Fung, PhD '71**, group chairman of Li and Fung Group; **Shing-Tung Yau**, the William Casper Graustein Professor of Mathematics at Harvard and director of the Tsinghua Mathematical Sciences Center; and **Michael Enright, AB '80, MBA '86, PhD '91**, the Sun Hung Kai Professor at the School of Business of the University of Hong Kong and the director of the Asia-Pacific Competitiveness Program at the Hong Kong Institute of Economics and Business Strategy.

That evening, GSAS partnered with the Harvard Club of Hong Kong to host a dinner at the Hong Kong Club and a talk by **William C. Kirby, PhD '81**, the T. M. Chang Professor of China Studies; Spangler Family Professor of Business Administration; director of the Harvard Fairbank Center for Chinese Studies; and the chairman of the Harvard China Fund. More than 100 people attended, making it the largest event in the history of the Harvard Club of Hong Kong. ☞

CHARTING NEW PATHS FOR DMS STUDENTS

The Division of Medical Sciences — the interfaculty PhD program with the Harvard Medical School — has just launched **Paths in DMS**, a career and mentorship program designed to assist students considering professional alternatives to academic research. HMS Associate Dean David Cardozo, who directs DMS, launched the program after realizing that “an increasingly large number of students are not following what we used to think of as the traditional career trajectory towards a purely academic research position. The revolution in modern biology has permeated many levels of society and has created new needs and opportunities for highly trained PhDs. Students are now considering a wide range of futures, both in the public and private sectors.”

Paths in DMS gives students with a common interest the chance to join in career-building activities and networking events. The program has established seven pathways to start: science writing, law, biotechnology, public health, science policy, education, and consulting. The paths will be student-directed, each with an associated student group or club, a website, representation from the Office of Career Services, a faculty advisor, and alumni as well as other external mentors. ☞



Jonathan Ruel

PhD candidate Cherie Ramirez is a coordinator of the new science writing path.

Jonathan Ruel



M. Lee Pelton

COUNCIL MEMBER PELTON ASSUMES HELM AT EMERSON

M. Lee Pelton, PhD '84, English, the former president of Willamette University and a former dean at Colgate University and Dartmouth College, assumed office as the 12th president of Emerson College in Boston on July 1.

Peter Meade, the chair of the Emerson Board of Trustees, describes Pelton as “a dynamic leader with an impressive record of accomplishment in higher education, a steadfast commitment to academic excellence and diversity, and what those who know him well describe as a calm but confident demeanor and a passion for stewardship.”

In addition to his service on the GSAS Alumni Council, Pelton has served on Harvard's Board of Overseers as vice-chair of the executive committee. He has been active in several higher education associations and cultural organizations, including the Board of Directors of the American Council on Education (past chair) and the Association of American Colleges and Universities. He is a magna cum laude graduate of Wichita State University. While completing his PhD at Harvard, he served as Senior Tutor at Winthrop House.

“I look forward to helping welcome Lee Pelton to the company of Boston-area college and university presidents,” says Harvard President Drew Gilpin Faust. “Lee is a distinguished Harvard alumnus and a highly respected former member of our Board of Overseers, and I wish him and Emerson every success as they launch an exciting future together.” ☞

HARVARD IS...

the dynamic connection
between students and
teachers at all levels



MARLON KUZMICK

Victoria Liublinska, a PhD candidate in statistics, is congratulated by GSAS Dean Allan Brandt on winning the 2011 Derek C. Bok Award for Excellence in Graduate Student Teaching of Undergraduates. Liublinska used assignments featuring iMovies to motivate her undergraduates, in the process building a research case for the effectiveness of multimedia teaching tools. "We work hard to show them that statistics are not just boring math," she says. To read more about what Liublinska's passion for teaching statistics, visit alumni.harvard.edu/colloquy/harvard-is.

ENHANCING THE STUDENT
EXPERIENCE

STEPHANIE MITCHELL



Xiao-Li Meng, PhD '90

I CHOOSE HARVARD...

"All good ideas come from students. You just have to listen to what they are asking for and make it happen," says Xiao-Li Meng, PhD '90, Whipple V. N. Jones Professor of Statistics and department chair.

This is precisely what he did when statistics graduate students came to him to ask for more support in learning how to teach. Meng and his colleagues partnered with the Bok Center for Teaching and Learning to design a required practicum for their first-year PhD students.

"There is an old expression that, when you teach, you learn twice. Teaching requires you to question the very fundamentals and relearn very deeply," says Meng.

After completing the practicum, students spend subsequent years honing their skills as teaching fellows and using these experiences to prepare for their future. "Not only are we teaching them to teach, but this experience is giving them communication skills they can use in all aspects of their careers," says Meng.

This culture of teaching has helped the department meet the demand of a growing number of undergraduates who want to concentrate in statistics. It has also garnered prize-winning recognition: an unprecedented five graduate students in the same department, in as many years, received a Derek C. Bok Award for Excellence in Graduate Student Teaching of Undergraduates.

To read more about Meng's commitment to teaching, including why he shared rejection letters for one of his papers with his students, or to make a gift to the Graduate School Fund, visit alumni.harvard.edu/colloquy/i-choose-harvard.



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ALUMNI EVENTS AND NOTICES

Questions? Contact the GSAS Office of Alumni Relations at www.gsas.harvard.edu/alumni, gsaa@fas.harvard.edu, or 617-495-5591.

APRIL 13-14 | ALUMNI WEEKEND 2012

Save the date for the Graduate School's annual alumni gathering!



APRIL 13 : REUNION FOR ALUMNI IN CHEMISTRY AND CHEMICAL BIOLOGY!

Join leaders from academia and industry for a day of panel discussions. Mingle with faculty and network with peers and colleagues.



APRIL 14: ALUMNI DAY

Come back to Cambridge for this time-honored GSAS tradition! The day includes a keynote talk by renowned climate change expert Daniel Schrag, faculty symposia across the disciplines, and a festive luncheon at the Faculty Club.



ALUMNI EVENTS ON THE WEST COAST

GSAS will bring Harvard faculty to San Francisco and Seattle this spring for lively discussion and networking. Alumni in those areas, watch for more information.

ALUMNI MENTORSHIP ON CAREER DEVELOPMENT

GSAS will partner with the Office of Career Services on an event for current graduate students called [Leveraging Your PhD in the Workplace](#), scheduled for April 20, 2012. Alumni working in careers outside of academia, please contact the GSAS Office of Alumni Relations if you are interested in taking part in this event or joining a network of Harvard career advisors and mentors for GSAS students.

POINT OF CONNECTION

Do you want to connect with Harvard's alumni services? Reconnect with the Graduate School? Learn about upcoming events, and stay on top of news about GSAS students and alumni? We invite you to make the GSAS alumni web portal your central point of connection. Access all the services and information you need here: www.gsas.harvard.edu/alumni.

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