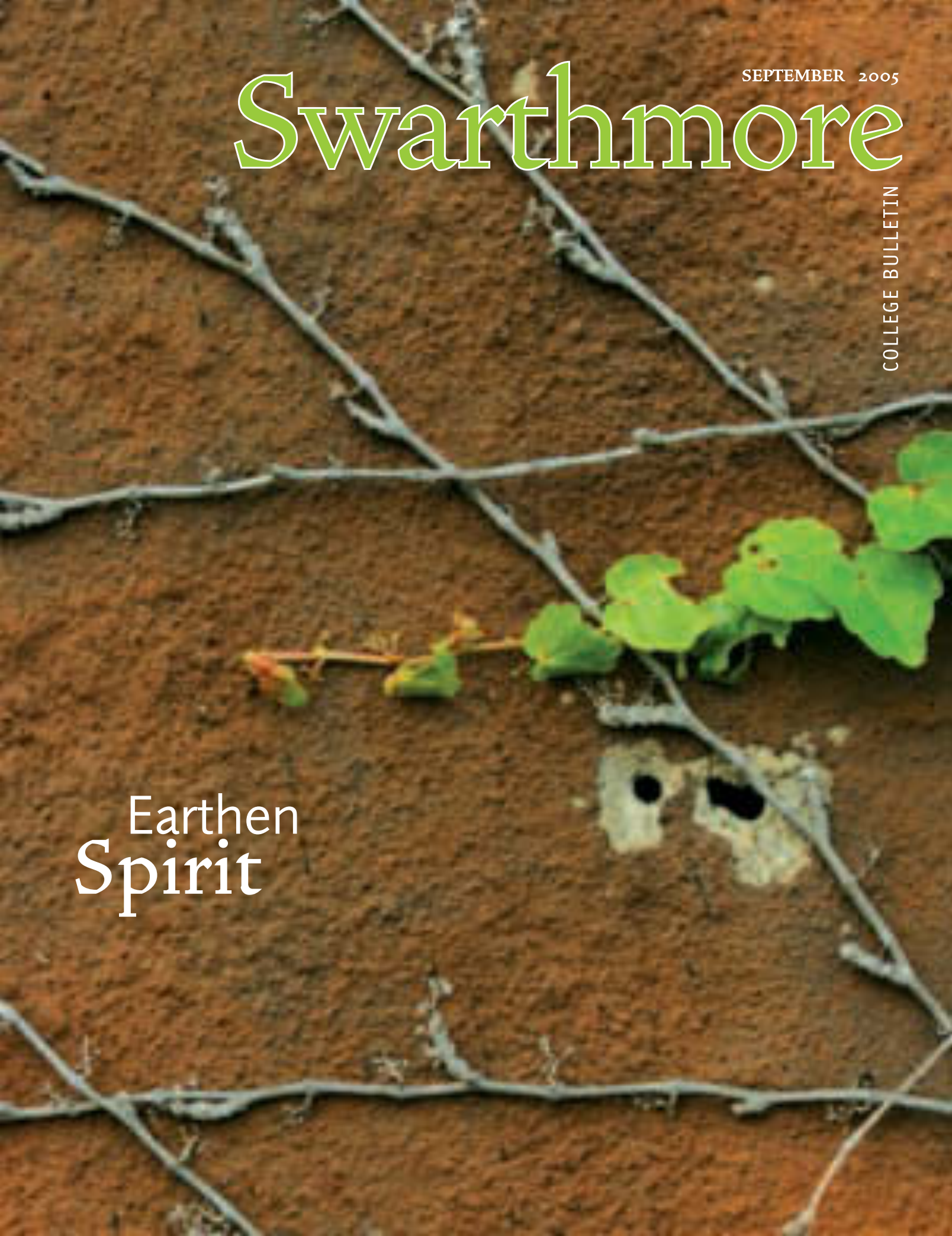


SEPTEMBER 2005

Swarthmore

COLLEGE BULLETIN

Earthen
Spirit





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On the cover: The spirit of life endures in Chester, Pa., despite environmental degradation caused by a cluster of waste-treatment plants there. Story on page 16.

Opposite: The night after arriving on campus, new students pass the light and sing the Swarthmore Alma Mater at First Collection. For more on this recent tradition, see “Parlor Talk,” page 2.

Photograph by Eleftherios Kostans

The approach of my 40th high school reunion got me thinking about the institution that was my school—and the powerful effect it had on me. I was schooled for 14 years by stern masters (we actually called them “masters”) in an all-male, all-white, private academy where there were winners and losers in all things. And, in an environment like that, I was mostly a loser.

I was an amiable but quizzical elementary student who grew increasingly ironic and sullen in middle school. By sophomore year in high school, I was openly rebellious. I hated the required sports (three seasons—no mercy). I wasn’t much good in the classroom either. English and history were manageable; I liked reading and thinking about other people’s stories. But most other subjects required correct answers, which, invariably, I could not supply.

I painfully learned French grammar, which was whipped into us by a latter-day de Sade. Math was the worst. I failed both 9th-grade algebra and 10th-grade geometry, scratching out passing grades in summer school. But in 11th grade, I ran into trigonometry. I had learned to find x , but the introduction of

y and z totally baffled me. I hit a wall not only in math but in chemistry, which required the math.

Somehow, I survived. Literature and history captured my attention. I took an art history course. I learned to write. I joined the newspaper staff and, to my surprise, became editor-in-chief.

After repeating my entire junior year—and taking only humanities in 12th grade—I managed to get into college. Looking back, I know that I learned to think and write, but I never loved that school. So why am I going to a reunion?

I can’t deny a deep attachment to the place—and to the classmates who survived it with me. I have since learned from them that I wasn’t the only one

who struggled. And I now realize that I also got a great education.

Many alumni have told me the same tale about Swarthmore. They weren’t sure they belonged here; they felt overwhelmed at times; and, by the time they graduated, they’d had their fill of the place.

Yet sometimes, I encounter alumni who are visiting the campus—not for a reunion but just to see the place again, to feel its energy. They stroll around, noticing the trees, watching students move purposefully from class to class. They find a favorite spot and stop, hearing a call in the wind. What is it that pulls them back? Swarthmore has a hold on them, just as my old school has had a grip on me for 40 years.

Raghu Karnad, this year’s senior speaker at Commencement (see p. 5) said it well: “I’ve sometimes felt that, at key moments, this campus was emotionally responsive—and I don’t mean the student body or the faculty or staff—I mean the campus itself. At the start of each semester, when you step off the SEPTA train and see Parrish Hall sitting there, its like its wings are outstretched to greet you and say, ‘Welcome back, man, welcome back.’”

—Jeffrey Lott



Swarthmore

COLLEGE BULLETIN

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HER OWN TOP 10

In the spirit of “101 Ways to be a Swarthmorean” (June *Bulletin*), I would like to submit a down- (not up-)graded list of 10 ways to have been a Swarthmorean, in no particular order:

1. Race through the underground passages of downtown Philly to make the train after an evening concert. Miss the train anyway.
2. Get gym credit for folk dancing and bicycling.
3. Have your boyfriend ask his mother to write to the dean saying it's OK for you to visit his house over a weekend.
4. If female, parade around the first weeks of freshman year with a large placard bearing your official nickname.
5. Go to the “druggie” for a sundae after a nonalcoholic dance. (Beats getting drunk any day.)
6. Type a friend's paper, correcting his/her grammar/spelling, and then have it get a better mark than yours.
7. Worry about flunking if a train goes over the underpass while you're below.
8. Find that nice flat rock in Crum Woods.
9. Be serenaded by the Wharton tuba at 3 a.m. Be reviled for same by your hall-mates.
10. Become addicted to that essential diet supplement, peanut butter and honey (increasingly necessary during wartime).

LOUISE ZIMMERMAN FORSCHER '44
Exeter, N.H.

MOUTHINGS OF THE MOB

Joel Gales' ['77] letter in the June *Bulletin* regarding William R. Kenan Jr. Professor of Political Science Kenneth Sharpe's statements about American foreign policy (“Q+A,” March *Bulletin*) is disappointing because of its hyperbolic language and unexamined assumptions. These two ills—exaggeration and sloppy thinking—characterize much of today's public political discourse.

In his new book *What's Wrong With Democracy*, Loren Samons, who teaches classical studies at Boston University examines what it means to be (in Gales' words) “free in America” and to be part of (again, Gales' words) “the greatest birth of democratic governments.” Samons argues persuasively that the ideas of freedom and

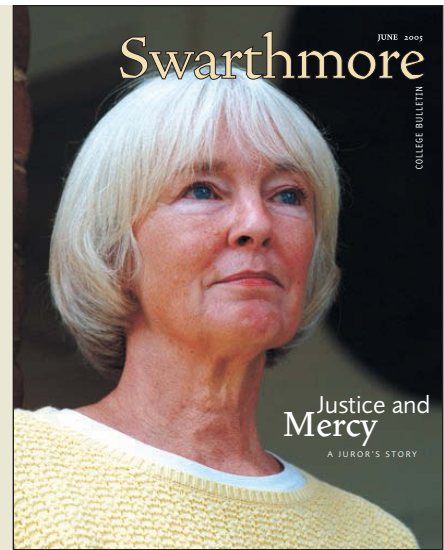
democracy (and also those of “choice” and “diversity”—both now nearly totally untethered in meaning from their Greek origins—have been transformed in contemporary America from a means of achieving justice into the definition of justice itself. In other words, operating in the manner that the core values of religion operate, the concepts of “freedom” and “democracy” go praised and unexamined, like deities admitting to, Samons writes, “no philosophical opposition.”

Why is it important to evaluate what we mean by freedom, democracy, choice, and diversity? Why should we admit to their philosophical opposition? Because our political discourse is littered with the terms, because politicians bludgeon us

"WE JUST CAN'T EXPORT DEMOCRACY TO COUNTRIES UNREADY FOR IT. NOR CAN WE RID THE WORLD OF ALL DICTATORS."

with the happiness that these political values promise, and because it is becoming nearly impossible to interrogate the concepts as means rather than ends without risking being labeled a left wing nut, a heretic, or possibly being led off to Guantánamo. The government has artfully shaped these concepts into a wartime rhetorical foundation that undergirds its efforts to “help others be free” (Gales' words). Yet the result has been the deaths of hundreds of thousands of innocent civilians in the Middle East and nearly 2,000 American soldiers, and there is no end in sight to the killing.

When democracy and freedom are idealized in this way, I ask, “In whose interest is this?” And then I tend to follow the money. The popular conception of democratic freedoms—which boil down to a largely undefined sense of personal rights along with the right to vote—can be fruitfully opposed by an intentionality less pseudo-religious and more concrete: Freedom to buy, the choice to buy what you want, and the sensitivity to diversity that allows the opening of new markets across



gender, racial, and international lines are all in the interest of the multinational corporation. The current administration would not have gotten so far with its foray into Iraq on these less palatable grounds.

In *Confessions of Felix Krull: Confidence Man*, Thomas Mann's narrator identifies as universally faulty “pleasure in the salacious for its own sake” and “verbal excesses.” People talk as if they were dealing with the simplest matters, he says, “but to talk of them in a loose and careless way is to surrender to the mouthings of the mob the most important and mysterious concern of nature and of life.” At the very least, those of us who have earned (or in my case fallen into) the privilege and prestige of a Swarthmore degree must hold ourselves and our circles of influences accountable to the mouthings of the mob.

RICHARD DIFELICIANANTONIO '79
Collegetown, Pa.

WE CAN'T EXPORT DEMOCRACY

I am mystified by Joel Gales' claim in the June *Bulletin* that the man in the White House has given the world “the greatest birth of democratic governments and popular pressure for the same in many years.” To what is he referring? Afghanistan and Iraq come to mind, but neither, to my thinking, measure up to democracy, either in fact or in making. Quite the contrary: Democracy and an undergirding rule of law have no chance in either country once our military leave, if ever. We just can't export democracy to countries unready for it. Nor can we rid the world of all dictators.

Please turn to page 79.

A SENSE OF



Jonathan Franzen '81 (right, with faculty escort Philip Weinstein, Alexander Griswold Cummins Professor of English Literature) described his early days as a writer: "When I came to Swarthmore in 1977, I thought I might want to be an investigative journalist. I volunteered for *The Phoenix*, and I got assigned to

investigate why the College's housekeepers didn't belong to a union. To do the story, I had to interview the College's financial vice president, Ed Cratsley, but one of my defects as a journalist, it turned out, was that I was afraid to do interviews.... Soon after this, I decided I should be a fiction writer. The great thing about fiction—I remember actually thinking this—was that you got to invent all the quotes."



Daniel Hoffman (left, with Peter Schmidt, professor of English literature) read from a Phi Beta Kappa ceremony poem he had written in 1964, the centenary of the College:

Are we ready to go forth? Where you have come from
The students will be ever young; there it is only
The faculties and trees grow older. Leaving this friendly
Hillside, you will reach your destinations—be sure
In your luggage, among trophies, clothes, and lists
Of those Important Books as yet unread, to bring
The Catalogue of the Ships and tales of revolution—
the Russian, the Industrial—and explications
of both the valence table and the vertebrates
who, since the Good Duke dreamed a green
world where the court
corrupts no man, agree upon hypotheses
that define the Good and tell the False from the True.



Anne Schuchat '80 (left, with Richard Schuldenfrei, Professor of Philosophy) told the story of her career, interspersing the following four "homilies" to the graduating class:

1. It's not the end; it's the beginning.
2. You can change your plans. Keep your passion, but allow yourself to follow it to new places.

3. History happens fast. It is all around us. Don't forget to treasure the times when it actually moves forward.
4. The world is small; the problems are big. But there are solutions everywhere. Make your life be about solutions.

Complete transcripts of honorary degree citations and remarks by all speakers at the baccalaureate, Last Collection, and Commencement exercises are on the Web at www.swarthmore.edu/commencement.

PLACE

Commencement 2005

By Jeffrey Lott

Photographs by Eleftherios Kostans

Three hundred eighty members of the Class of 2005 bade farewell to Swarthmore on a warm, sunny Sunday in May, following the College's 133rd Commencement. President Alfred H. Bloom (whose Commencement remarks are on page 6) awarded honorary degrees to critically acclaimed author Jonathan Franzen '81; noted poet and educator Daniel Hoffman, a former member of Swarthmore's English faculty; and Anne Schuchat '80, a physician at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Sara Lawrence Lightfoot Professor of English Literature Charles James addressed the graduating class at baccalaureate services on May 28. The senior class chose Professor of Economics Mark Kuperberg as Last Collection speaker.

The class also chose Raghu Karnad, a political science major with a minor in biology from Bangalore, India, as their class speaker. In a warm and often humorous address, Karnad emphasized the sense of place he found at Swarthmore. He also took time to remember two classmates who had died during their college years. Katie Stauffer was killed in an auto accident in March 2003, and Robert Berman died suddenly in his room in Wharton Hall in November 2004. Berman, who had completed his graduation requirements, was awarded a posthumous bachelor of arts degree by the faculty. Following are excerpts from Karnad's remarks:

I've always been sentimental about this place. I think that being at Swarthmore is like a romance. No, that doesn't mean that it's been one continuously passionate, sexy affair.... But I've often felt like my relationship to Swarthmore itself was subject to those ups and downs and ups.

I've sometimes felt that, at key moments, this campus was emotionally responsive—and I don't mean the student body or the faculty or staff—I mean the campus itself. At the start of each semester, when you step off the SEPTA train and see Parrish Hall sitting there, it's like its wings are outstretched to greet you and say, "Welcome back, man, welcome back."

The weather at the end of November this year was usually fine. But the day that Bobby died—that evening, the campus was shrouded in a thick cool mist. I was deeply moved, and I know it was comforting to his friends. Bobby and Katie Stauffer are very much in our hearts and our memories....

The campus has been wishing us the sweetest farewell for the last couple of weeks now—Swarthmore is going to miss '05. Sometimes it's been putting on a brave face, all sunshine and smiles and flowers behind its ear. And sometimes it breaks down, and for a few days it gets all gloomy and tearful. However it is you feel about this being over, I just hope that you'll look back on your 4 years with Swat, and you'll recall them in the words we use for the best of our old romances:

It was a lovely college. Actually, you know there were ups and downs ... sometimes it was just unreasonable ... but I worked hard; I gave a lot. And I learned a lot. I didn't want it to last forever ... 4 years was about all I could take ... but we had a damn good time together—and standing here at the end of it, I'm proud of the person I've become.



THE CLASS OF 2005

[By the Numbers]

Graduates	380
Total Degrees Awarded	395
Bachelor of Arts	367
Bachelor of Science	28
Double Degrees	15
Percentage of Women	51
Percentage Who Studied Abroad	39
Highest Honors	12
High Honors	64
Honors	49
Percentage of Graduates Receiving Honors	33
Top Five Majors	
Biology	53
Economics	49
Political Science	44
English Literature	35
Engineering	28
Women Engineering Majors	6
Greek Majors	3
Women Greek Majors	3
Medieval Studies Majors	1
Postgraduate Plans (Percentage)	
Planning to Enter Workforce Immediately	65
Going Straight to Graduate or Professional School	23
Planning Graduate School Within 2 to 5 Years	65
Travel, Vacation, or Do Not Know	3

Sources: Office of Institutional Research; Career Services Office Senior Survey. All percentages rounded to nearest integer.

On the Reemergence of Moralistic Absolutism

2005 COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS BY PRESIDENT ALFRED H. BLOOM



ELEFTHERIOS KOSTANS

President Alfred H. Bloom

I would like to take a few minutes to reflect on a national phenomenon I find quite troubling and to which I am convinced we must respond: the reemergence of moralistic absolutism:

During the middle years of the 20th century, moralistic absolutism—reductionist, impermeable, unexamined, and passionate conviction about what is right—fueled imperialist Japan, Soviet communism, and Maoist China, as it did McCarthyism here at home and this nation's undis-

criminating response to communism in Vietnam. Across history, such moralistic absolutism has constantly intensified and widened ethnic and religious conflict and impelled advocacy groups of every persuasion toward confrontation, stereotyping, and demonization rather than reasoned dialogue.

Today, moralistic absolutism powers radical Islamic fundamentalism and North Korea's paranoid self-reliance and is on the rise again in this nation in the troubling form of a cluster of unexamined moralistic concepts including "the sanctity of life," "liberty above all," "axis of evil," "anti-affirmative action," "intelligent design," and "family values," which are exerting increasing influence on American social attitudes, scientific and legal practice, and domestic and foreign policy.

I say "troubling" because, whenever populations or groups embrace such absolutes as the mobilizing principles of their identity and worldview, complex ethical reasoning is suppressed; perspectives and facts that complicate accepted understanding are ignored; individuals who do not share the favored view are cast as "other"—often as immoral, unpatriotic, or threatening—and attitudes and actions that would otherwise be constrained by respect for others and by more far-reaching perspectives are allowed free, and often, destructive rein.

Faced as we are with this rise in moralistic absolutism and the social division and damage that it can engender, I ask you to think with me for a few minutes about how best to release in others the more complex and permeable modes of thought that can bridge the seemingly unbridgeable divides that absolutism creates. Sustaining democracy and shaping a constructively collaborative society and world require that we succeed at this historically recurring responsibility.

Admittedly, it is difficult to reach both those whose identities

are most bound in such absolutes and those invested in manipulating absolutes for their own instrumental agendas. But I believe that it is more possible to reach across divides of absolutism than we might first imagine. If, as has been graphically illustrated in Vietnam, Israel, Palestine, and Iraq, the use of force to intimidate others out of absolutism tends only to tighten its hold; and if confrontational advocacy likewise tends only to harden absolutist resolve, then how can we foster in the place of unexamined and impassioned absolutism, the open, analytic, collaborative orientation fundamental to democracy and to meeting the human and environmental challenges that we face as a society and world?

I would like to suggest the parameters of an approach, which I hope you, graduates of the Class of 2005, will, over time in your own ways, refine and perfect:

To begin, it seems to me that for any approach to be successful in releasing the grip of absolutism, it must first establish a context of validation, confidence, respect, and partnership—a context that deflects defensiveness and enables all sides to let go of the security and certainty that moralistic absolutes confer.

To convey validation and confidence, the approach must emerge from and communicate the expectation that, beyond differences in attitude and belief, there lies a common human ground of intellect, care, and valuing—a common ground that will provide the building blocks of shared purpose and constructive action.

To forge respect and partnership, the approach must be conceived and engaged as a mutual process, pursued with personal and cultural humility, responsive to the sensitivities, concerns, and fears of the other, insulated to the extent possible from external differences in privilege and power, and advanced through careful listening and shared exploration of the other's ways of seeing the world.

With that context of supportive human connection established, the way then opens for both sides to reflect on the contradictions between the implications of absolutes and the complexity and richness of their own moral logic and intuitions.

Wouldn't most advocates for the absolute "sanctity of life," having reflected on that concept, find themselves uncomfortable with its implication that to be consistent with the notion of absolute sanctity of life means arguing against war no matter the circumstance, against capital punishment, against a patient's expressed will to forego further medical intervention, and for expending significant portions of their own and this country's wealth to prevent deaths from poverty and disease around the world?

Wouldn't most proponents of "liberty above all," after reflecting on that concept, likely come to recognize that liberty, absolute and unconstrained by safeguards to health, personal security, and

economic opportunity, precludes the very exercise and enjoyment of that liberty?

Wouldn't most supporters of unconditional war on terrorism come to admit the simultaneous need for some protection of civil rights and privacy?

Wouldn't most champions of "intelligent design," once understanding how fundamental evolutionary processes are to the emergence of new diseases and new variants of known diseases—and to their prevention and cure—be prompted to seek a more complex moral formulation that would reconcile their religious convictions with support for scientific education and research based on evolutionary theory?

Wouldn't most champions of "family values," learning that their son or daughter was gay, feel emotional and moral unease at defining their own child as "other" and at denying that child human and civil rights on that account and be prompted to seek a more complex moral framework that would reconcile their social and religious convictions with those intuitions for compassion and equity?

And wouldn't many of those on both sides of the Palestine-Israeli divide, who have at some point espoused the annihilation of the other nation as a moral absolute, likely retreat from that position if they perceived an opportunity for a more humane path to security, identity-confirmation, prosperity, and peace?

I suggest then that confronting the failure of moralistic absolutes to capture the richness and complexity of one's own moral logic and intuitions—particularly in a context of validation, confidence, respect, and partnership—can lead, over time, to replacing such absolutes with a more examined, independently constructed, complex, and permeable framework for ethical thinking.

We recognize that transition to independent ethical thought in the works of ethical thinkers from Confucius and Socrates to the Existentialists and Martin Luther King Jr., providing persuasive evidence of its generality and potential across culture and time. And we also recognize that transition as one we have experienced ourselves—often during our undergraduate days.

Moreover, as moralistic absolutes are submitted to the critique of personal moral logic and intuition, deconstructed, and then reconstructed into more open, complex, and comprehensive ethical frameworks, striking similarities begin to emerge among the principles you and others hold.

Who, after all, upon independent ethical reflection, would not endorse both the principle of protecting life and the principle of respecting another's will? Both the principle of protecting freedom and the principle of safeguarding personal security? Both free expression of religious conviction and advancing scientific understanding? Both nonviolent and just solutions to resolving conflict?

So the disagreements that remain are most often not about which abstract principles you endorse but rather about the way mutually held principles are applied to, and balanced in, the particular situation.

How much of the federal budget should be allocated to what kinds of foreign aid? What intrusions on privacy are acceptable to defend against terrorism? How can religious conviction best be

integrated with civic commitment to intellectual freedom, right to privacy, and equal protection under the law? What resolution of a particular conflict will bring peace as well as security, identity-confirmation, and economic opportunity to both sides?

And when, in the light of examined and open ethical frameworks, disagreements are recognized to be about where you are along the same spectrum rather than about which spectrum you are on, then no one can any longer be dismissed as unqualifiedly "other"; then disagreements that appeared frozen in irreconcilable principle become susceptible to specification, discussion, and negotiation; and possibilities open for constructive collaboration, for reasoned persuasion, and for imaginative resolution that carry the potential to bridge what were, initially, seemingly unbridgeable divides.

Each of you is graduating today as a recipient of the distinctive legacy of this remarkable College.

With a little help from faculty and friends, you have developed impressively sharp analytic and expressive skills that will enable you to meet the full challenges of the careers you choose and to rise within those careers to the levels of responsibility to which you aspire and which our society and world need you to assume.

With a little help from this community, you have reaffirmed your commitment to make a difference and have anchored that commitment in a more complex and independent approach to determining the right and in a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the world in which you will make your mark.

And more directly germane to my topic today, you have also developed the habit of drawing on your own intellectual and personal strengths to connect with others across differences of experience, circumstance, and belief in ways that deliver validation, confidence, respect, and partnership. Indeed, that mode of human connection, informed by the values and practice of this community, has become an essential part of who you are and of what you most value in yourselves.

Further, you are ready to place that mode of human connection in the service of releasing in others a willingness to explore, accept, and develop the richness and complexity of their own moral logic and intuition, just as the validation, confidence, respect, partnership, and intellectual challenge you have experienced here have motivated and will continue to motivate you to explore, accept, and develop your own ethical intelligence.

I hope that calling attention at this consequential moment to these further dimensions of your Swarthmore legacy will encourage you, at every opportunity—in what you say, write, and do and in how you advocate for the good—to take leadership in unlocking the grip of moralistic absolutism, in fostering in its place the open, analytic, collaborative orientation essential to democracy and to meeting the human and environmental challenges we face as a society and world.

I have the utmost confidence in the ability of each of you to contribute in your own way to this critical task, and I commend you for all that you have done to inspire that confidence.

President Bloom's recent Commencement speeches and other public addresses are now collected on the Web at www.swarthmore.edu/about/presidents__addresses.html.

SCIENCE CENTER WINS "GREEN DESIGN" AWARD



Users of Swarthmore's new science center can monitor the building's energy usage in real time through a set of instruments mounted in the Eldridge Commons.

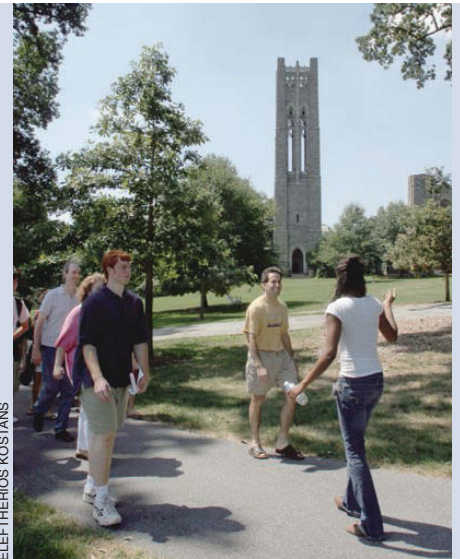
Swarthmore's new science center has received LEED certification from the U.S. Green Building Council. LEED—leadership in energy and environmental design—is a voluntary set of national standards for developing high-performance, sustainable buildings.

"Thanks to the substantial input we received from students and faculty, we were committed to producing a sustainable building from the earliest planning stages of this project," Director of Planning and Construction Janet Semler says. "Maintaining stewardship of the land and creating opportunities in science education to interpret how the building interacts with the environment is consistent with the College's mission to be socially responsible."

The science center's is the first building on campus whose planning and design included consideration of the project's environmental implications. Its sustainable design features include:

- Local stone and wood products as celebrated architectural details
- Maximum use of daylight in social and teaching spaces
- Butterfly roofs that collect storm water for irrigation and mitigate erosion impact on Crum Creek
- Fritted glass in curtain walls that reduces solar gain and helps to alleviate bird impacts.

—Tom Krattenmaker



Sabrina Stevens '07 (right) conducts a tour for a few of the nearly 4,000 prospective students and their families who tour the campus each year.

Applied: 4,085
Admitted: 917
Arrived: 389

On Aug. 23, the Class of 2009 arrived on campus, 389 strong. A year ago, almost all were starting their final year of high school—and the college application process that eventually brought them to Swarthmore.

The College received 4,085 applications for the current freshman class. A total of 917 students—including 160 notified during the early-decision period—were sent letters of acceptance.

Of the students who attended from high schools that report class rank, 27 percent were valedictorians or salutatorians. Forty-five percent were in the top 2 percent of their high school class, and 88 percent in the top decile.

Sixty-two percent of the 198 women and 191 men were educated in public high schools, 25 percent in private independent schools, 5 percent in parochial schools, and 8 percent in schools overseas.

Thirty-seven percent of the students identify themselves as domestic students of color. Asian Americans make up 17 percent of the class; African Americans, 7 percent; and Latino/a students, 12 percent. One percent are in the category Native American/Hawaiian/other.

—Jeffrey Lott

The Road to Medical School

IT'S ARDUOUS, BUT A SWARTHMORE EDUCATION SEEMS TO HELP

For more than half of medical-school applicants nationwide, acceptance will remain a dream. The odds for Swarthmore students are a little different, however. Despite the fierce competition and a grueling time- and money-consuming application process, 85 percent of the 39 Swarthmore students who applied to medical schools last year were accepted.

The decision to become a doctor is not one to be taken lightly and comes earlier to some than it does to others. Jamie Larsen '05 says: "I had pursued a number of medically related endeavors in high school, including two summers working with two incredible gynecologists. It was wonderful to help people manage their health needs and to feel you were really making a difference in someone's life. That was when I decided that medicine was for me."

Jason Bronstein '05, on the other hand, had first considered being a theater director or English professor. He even participated in an externship with a theater troupe. Then, at the end of his freshman year, he worked in a mental health facility. "I realized that I met the challenge of dealing with the patients with zeal. I enjoyed working with them and admired how the doctors were able to help them, even when they weren't always compliant."

Once the decision becomes clear, the daunting process of applying to medical school begins. "In a process in which applicants are casting their fate among 35,000 other very qualified applicants for 17,000 spaces, the likelihood of everything working out exactly right seems very remote indeed and is greatly cher-



The odds are good for Swarthmore students and alumni who apply to medical school, but the process is arduous. Fortunately, there's plenty of help to be had on campus.

ished, when it does," Gigi Simeone, the College health sciences adviser writes in her annual report.

Still, at Swarthmore, students refuse to be discouraged. During 2004, Simeone says, she and Barbara Hirshfeld, administrative assistant, worked with 321 undergraduates from freshmen to seniors, constituting 22 percent of enrolled students, and 71 alumni, who are interested in health sciences. Simeone stresses the importance, before applying, of obtaining as many medically related experiences as possible and picking the brains of physicians and other medical students. "It's a huge undertaking, and you should make sure that it's the right one for you," she says.

She stresses the benefit for many students of applying to their home state schools. "The state universities are excellent schools, and the students get a tuition break," she says. Larsen, a Texas native, agrees. She applied to seven schools within the state system, was matched with the San Antonio school, and starts this fall. "Cost

and location were issues for me," she says.

Simeone encourages potential applicants to visit her office at least 15 months before the date they actually wish to enter medical school, send in their applications in the following June, and prepare for interviews the following year. "Gigi and Barbara have been a big help, both in terms of logistical issues and emotional ones," says Bronstein, who, also accepted at Drexel University in Philadelphia and the Robert Wood Johnson Medical School in New Jersey, is attending NYU School of Medicine. Simeone's office also provides the same sort of support for alumni.

"We encourage everyone—even the top students—to apply to a range of schools," Simeone says. "We have fabulous applicants with fabulous scores and fabulous experiences who may get into Harvard but not into Yale. It's really a crap shoot. So we have them apply to some dream schools, some reach schools, and some where they're likely to get in."

"We have no cutoffs," she continues. "Many other schools have similar acceptance rates, but they only support students with A-minus averages and above. At Swarthmore, anyone who wants to try, can."

Simeone is grateful for alumni support of student applicants. "I hope they know how unbelievably helpful they are," she says, impressed by their positive responses to students who approach them for internships, jobs, and advice. "It makes such a difference."

—Carol Brévar-Demm

Student Killed in Car Crash

On July 13, Tariq Fischer '08 was killed in an automobile accident on Interstate 20 near Atlanta. Two University of Georgia students—Imran Khan and Muhammad Ebadullah Hasan—also died in the accident. As a first-year student, Fischer quickly became known as a lively announcer at athletic contests and sports editor for *The Phoenix*. He covered the

men's soccer team during its 2004 season as they went to the Centennial Conference play-offs. All three young men, who had been friends since childhood, were remembered for their involvement in the Islamic community at a funeral at the Islamic Society of Georgia. A memorial gathering was held on campus Sept. 3.



Tariq Fischer

KYLE LEACH

The current debate in Kansas over how to teach evolution gives credence to “quack science” and endangers good science education when it is most needed, says Colin Purrington, associate professor of biology, who dismisses claims that evolution is “just a theory.”

“Evolution is a theory like gravity is a theory,” says Purrington, who teaches a class on evolution every fall. “The low-budget remake of the Scopes trial that is currently taking place in Kansas will make educated Kansans want to flee the state so that their children will not be subjected to quack scientific ideas such as ‘intelligent design.’”

Kansas Board of Education officials began hearings in May on whether to require that public school science instruction treat evolution as questionable and intelligent design as equally valid. In August, the board agreed on draft standards that encourage criticism of evolution; the standards will be reviewed further before a final vote is possible in October.

“It’s nearly impossible to teach evolution to children without coming under attack from religious fundamentalists

AS TRUE AS GRAVITY



ELEFTHERIOS KOSTANS

Evolutionary biologist Colin Purrington enjoys a snack with a distant relative at the Philadelphia Zoo. He says that educators cannot afford to be apathetic about attacks on the teaching of evolution and has compiled a Web site for science teachers.

who want to inject their beliefs into science curricula,” Purrington says. “They say ‘teach the controversy.’ But to do that is akin to debating with Holocaust deniers. It just gives credence to something that is made up.”

To combat what he sees as religious fundamentalism harming science education, Purrington has made available on the Web a set of resources for public school science teachers and their supporters. Included are news items on evolution cases around the country, a list of gifts for “brave science teachers,” editorial cartoons, and T-shirts and stickers of Charles Darwin. He also plans to have his students design exhibits on evolution for children. Learn more at <http://www.swarthmore.edu/NatSci/cpurrrin1/evol12/evoops.htm>.

Although his efforts have brought hate mail, Purrington says his outreach to lay audiences is essential: “Our kids’ futures depend on their receiving quality education if they are to compete on a global stage.”

—Tom Krattenmaker

Pasternack Honored by Chemical Society

Robert Pasternack, Edmund Allen Professor of Chemistry and Biochemistry, has received two awards from the Philadelphia Section of the American Chemical Society (ACS). In May, Pasternack was named the 2005 winner of the Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching in Chemical Science. This month, he was selected for the Philadelphia Section Award for “conspicuous scientific achievement through research,” to be presented in October.

Pasternack is a leading expert in the fields of bioinorganic chemistry and supramolecular chemistry, which examines the behavior and properties of arrays of molecules. He joined the faculty in 1982.



This sketch of poet W.H. Auden appeared in *The Phoenix* in March 1944. It’s one of many images and artifacts in the new Auden Web site created by Anne Garrison of the McCabe Library staff and Melanie Maksin '04.

Auden Web Site

The McCabe Library has created a new Web site, “Fellow Irresponsibles, Follow Me,” that chronicles the relationship of poet W.H. Auden with the College from 1940 to 1972. The Web exhibit paints a picture of the author through books, photographs, papers, and artifacts in the library’s collection. The site is at www.swarthmore.edu/library/auden.

Valelly Book Wins Praise

The Two Reconstructions: The Struggle for Black Enfranchisement (University of Chicago Press, 2004) by Professor of Political Science Professor Richard Valelly '75 was selected as the best work of historical political science published in

the last 2 years by the Politics and History Section of the American Political Science Association (APSA). Valelly’s book was chosen from a pool of almost 100 texts for the J. David Greenstone Book Award.

In July, Valelly was named a co-recipient of the Ralph J. Bunche Award of the APSA for 2005. He will receive the award this fall for “the best scholarly work in political science [that] explores the phenomenon of ethnic and cultural pluralism.”

In *The Two Reconstructions*, Valelly examines the history of black enfranchisement in the United States from the Reconstruction era and the civil rights movement to the present. He demonstrates how obstacles to voting faced by African Americans remain a serious problem today.

"An Onward Spirit"

www.swarthmore.edu/news/history

This spring, a new feature on the College's Web site made its quiet debut—"An Onward Spirit": A Brief History of Swarthmore College. The name comes from the first College planning meeting held in 1860 by founder Martha Tyson and her husband, Nathan, for a large group of Baltimore Friends. According to their daughter Isabella, the meeting produced "an onward spirit" that was carried to the Baltimore Yearly Meeting a few weeks later. Friends at that meeting shared their enthusiasm for a school for the higher education of Quaker children and decided to bring the message to similar meetings in Philadelphia and New York.

Far from exhaustive, the site is intentionally representative and is meant to highlight the consistency and longevity of Swarthmore's core tenets—the value of coeducation, intellectual rigor, and social responsibility. As with all Web-based projects, it remains a perpetual work-in-progress.

College history buffs will no doubt recognize many of the subjects covered, especially because *Swarthmore College: An Informal History* and past issues of the *Bulletin* and *The Phoenix* were key sources. When possible, links to related information in the on-line versions of those publications are provided.

"I fully expect to receive suggestions on how to build and add to the site," says project author Alisa Giardinelli, assistant director of news and information. "In fact, I'm looking forward to it."



1922

SWARTHMORE HISTORY DEBUTS ON THE WEB

1922: Twenty-two juniors enter the new Honors Program, the innovation of President Frank Aydelotte, who later said: "We never had at Swarthmore to contend with that type of academic conservatism which refuses open-minded consideration of new proposals merely because they are new."

1930: With the acquisition of Jane Addams' books on peace and social justice and the records of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, President Aydelotte's idea for a "peace collection" on campus begins to take shape.

1962: Students invite Communist Party official Gus Hall to speak on campus. As *Time* magazine wrote 2 years later, "President Courtney Smith ignored public outcries. Hall spoke. As

Smith tells old grads, 'Your college has guts. There are a lot of colleges that don't. Be proud of it.'"

1976: Swarthmore is named in a class action suit alleging that the College discriminated against women faculty members. Although the suit is decided in the College's favor, evidence presented in the case brings new attention to inequities in the treatment of men and women on the faculty.

2002: Swarthmore successfully uses its shareholder status to urge Lockheed Martin to bar discrimination based on sexual orientation. The resolution is the first in the country solely initiated by a college or university since the anti-apartheid movement in the 1980s.



1930



1873



1918



1976

1873: The College's first class—five women and one man—graduates. Among the graduates is President Edward Magill's daughter Helen, who later studied Greek at Boston University and became the first woman in the country to earn a Ph.D.

1918: Swarthmore becomes the only Quaker college to accept a Student Army

Training Corps on campus during World War I. *The Friends Intelligencer* decried the decision, saying the College had "compromised with evil" and had been "put to the test and found wanting."

FRIENDS HISTORICAL LIBRARY

A Visit to SWARTHMOOR

Last month, the field hockey and men's soccer teams went on tours of England. Under the direction of their coaches, Kelly Wilcox '97 and Eric Wagner, respectively, the teams played matches against English sides, trained, spread good will, and soaked up English culture. Tom Krattenmaker, the College's director of news and information, accompanied the soccer team and wrote an on-line journal for the College Web site. Below is one installment, which describes the team's journey to the place from which the College derived its name.

AUG. 8 "SWARTHMOOR COLLEGE"

It's one day after all the excitement at the Heywood Cricket Club—a hard act to follow, no doubt. The team has completed its morning training session under the tutelage of Jack Edwards, our guest coach and tour coordinator. We're back on the bus and driving northwest toward the Lake District. Beautiful English scenery passes our windows on yet another day of blue sky, sunshine, and cool breezes. I notice a turreted house on a hillside in the distance, and everywhere are massive black-and-white dairy cows munching on the green grass. Some surprisingly high and rugged mountains appear on the horizon as we near Ulverston, our first destination of this day trip. We drive past a stunning 11th-century castle.

Jack, a native of these parts, points out landmarks and tells us about the region's importance in Quaker history. It's no exaggeration to say that this is pretty much where it all started. We see an obelisk marking a hilltop spot called Pendle Hill—does that sound familiar, anyone?—and signs for a town called Kendal.

I have to tell you about Jack. He's been a good friend of Eric's

since they met at a soccer camp in the United States about 15 years ago, and Eric has made annual trips to the United Kingdom ever since to work with him. Jack is a 5-foot, 8-inch (if that) block of granite with a gray crew cut, a gruff voice, and an amazing arsenal of colorful colloquialisms. Jack doesn't suffer laziness or foolishness—or excuses from young soccer players, for that matter. Last night, while addressing the team as they boarded the bus following the big party, Jack said he expected them on the practice pitch the next morning "as bright as buttons." (They weren't.)

I ask Duncan Gromko '07 to join me for a quick interview as the bus driver exits the freeway and picks up a smaller, local highway. Duncan, a junior from just outside of Toledo, Ohio, is the



PHOTOGRAPHS BY TOM KRATTENMAKER

The men's varsity soccer team and the field hockey team toured England in August, playing against local club teams and taking in the English countryside, including Heywood Town (above) and Swarthmoor Hall (top right).



PHOTOGRAPHS BY ELEFTHERIOS KOSTANS

Glenavin White evacuated with her family in the early morning of Aug. 28, the day before Katrina closed Loyola University and flooded her home.

COLLEGE OPENS DOORS TO

Although classes at Swarthmore began on Aug. 29—the day that Hurricane Katrina struck the Gulf Coast—the College quickly joined other higher education institutions in responding to the plight of students whose campuses had been affected by the storm. President Alfred H. Bloom announced on Sept. 2 that Swarthmore could welcome up to 15 students from institutions closed by the disaster in the Gulf region.

Two students took advantage of the offer, arriving on campus the week of Sept. 4. Nikhil Sharma of Houston had planned to begin his freshman year at Tulane University, and Glenavin White of New Orleans was to be a junior at Loyola University there.

"We started receiving requests right after Hurricane Katrina [hit], asking whether we'd be opening up any space," Dean of Admissions Jim Bock '90 said. "This was a time-

sensitive issue. We wanted to offer some space, but we'd already started classes. We didn't want to put them into their classes [too far] behind academically."

The displaced students were admitted for one semester and their status will be re-examined in December, Bock said.

Sharma had been accepted by Swarthmore for the Class of 2009 but chose to enroll at Tulane. After a 6-hour drive from Houston to New Orleans on Aug. 27, Sharma was able to move into a third-floor dorm room before evacuating the city to return to Houston.

Tulane officials had said the university would reopen as soon as possible, but, by Aug. 31, Sharma and his family grew skeptical that the New Orleans university would be a viable option for the fall.

"We decided to look for some alternatives," Sharma said. He is now living in a sin-



son of a Swarthmore alum and onetime soccer player, Mark Gromko '72. His dad didn't insist on Duncan attending his alma mater, and Duncan had lots of choices. He was accepted at several other highly selective liberal arts colleges in addition to Swarthmore. It

came down to a gut decision following his second visit to campus.

"A couple people from my high school have asked me if going to Swarthmore is all work," says Duncan, who runs track in addition to playing soccer. "Sure, the academics are tough, but they're manageable, even with soccer and track. I've never stayed up past 1 a.m. studying. We study a lot, but if you enjoy it, it's not a burden. I think people at Swarthmore feel like we're getting an education different from most schools."

Given where we're heading, Duncan is just the guy to interview. His mother and stepmother are both deeply involved in Quakerism, and he went to Meeting regularly while growing up. Duncan says he wishes Collection were reinstated at the College.

"But, overall, I feel the core Quaker values are present in the administration of the College and the way the professors teach."

After stopping and asking for directions, we find the narrow, hedgerow-enclosed lane that leads to our destination. It's too tight for the bus, so we get out and walk the final distance.

"Hey, it's spelled wrong," one player jokes as the sign comes into view at the entry gate. And there it is: Swarthmoor Hall. This is perhaps the most revered spot in Quaker history and the place

from which Swarthmore College derives its name. I feel a little awed by the house looming over us. The course gray texture speaks to its tremendous age—it was built in the 16th century—and the house is huge, three stories, with vines covering the wall facing us.

Bill Shaw, the friendly-looking manager, steps out to greet us. He wasn't expecting us and has no idea who we are and why we are there. I quickly explain. "So, you're looking at your roots then, aren't you?" he says as he invites us in.

Bill spends the next hour or so giving us the history and taking us on a tour of the house, the place where George Fox found a haven for his radical Quaker faith. The history is fascinating, and Bill tells it well, keeping the athletes, coaches, and our guests thoroughly engaged. He catches himself at one point, though, and asks if he should continue. "Is this something the football team is interested in?"

There are lots of nods "yes." Sensing that Bill may need a little information on us, Assistant Coach Eric Savage, the son of Isaac H. Clothier Jr. Professor Emeritus of Biology Robert Savage, chimes in: "This is the smartest football team in America!" A few in the room chuckle, but no one argues. The lesson continues.

Bill bids us good-bye after standing in for the customary team photo, and we're back on the highway and on our way to Lake Windermere. Jack will be training the team again tomorrow morning before we tour Old Trafford, the home of Manchester United. Here's hoping the boys' buttons will be a little brighter this time.

The complete on-line journal about the soccer tour, with photos and film clips, can be found at <http://www.swarthmore.edu/news/soccer/index.html>. Players on the field hockey team also kept a word and photo journal, which can be found at http://www.swarthmore.edu/athletics/team__fieldhockey/UKtrip05.html.

TWO DISPLACED STUDENTS

gle on the third floor of Mary Lyon, although many of his belongings were stuck at Tulane.

White, a philosophy major at Loyola, evacuated with her family early on Aug. 28. She took clothes for "about four days," and didn't worry about where she might go to school because "they evacuate us several times each hurricane season." Her father, a pediatric cardiologist, returned to live and work at Oschner Hospital within days, but the family home was flooded "up to the kitchen counters" and she soon learned that Loyola would remain closed for the fall semester.

"I miss Loyola a lot—my professors and friends," she said. "But I had always thought of Swarthmore as an ideal college, so it's good to be here."

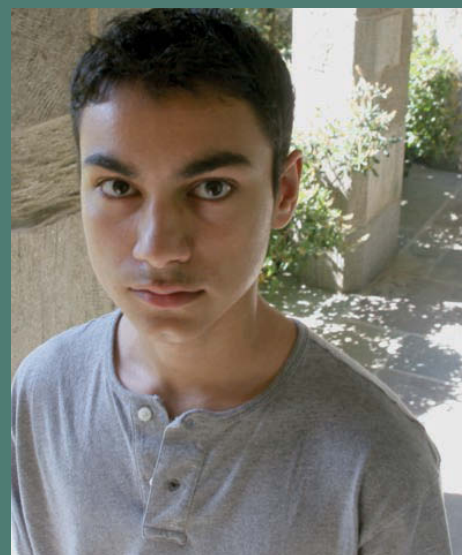
Members of the Swarthmore community have begun to organize other efforts to aid hurricane victims.

Approximately 60 students, faculty members, and borough residents met on Sept. 6 at the Lang Center for Civic and Social Responsibility to brainstorm ideas that ranged from housing refugees to organizing a lecture series on the systemic reasons for the size and scope of the disaster. There was particular enthusiasm for fund-raising and on-site volunteering in afflicted areas.

Pat James, associate director for student programs and training at the Lang Center, said: "This by no means is the end of this process. This is the start. There was a real groundswell all over campus."

—Reuben Heyman-Kantor '06

This article was adapted with permission from a Sept. 8 report in The Phoenix. The Bulletin will report in December about other Swarthmore responses to the disaster.



Nikhil Sharma's belongings were left behind in a third-floor dorm room at Tulane University. Now, he's living in Mary Lyon for a semester.

Who was Edward Parrish?

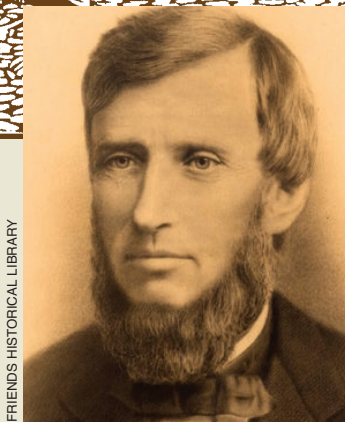
AND WHY DID HE QUIT?

The names are well known to Swarthmoreans: Martha Tyson, Lucretia Mott, Benjamin Hallowell, Samuel Willets, Edward Hicks Magill—all founders of the College. The women were pioneers of feminism and crusaders against slavery. Two of the men have College residence halls named for them; a third's name adorns a campus walk. But among the leading Quakers who envisioned Swarthmore in the 1860s, none is as well honored as Edward Parrish, the Philadelphia pharmacist and educator who became the College's first president. For it is Parrish whose name graces the College's physical and emotional center—Parrish Hall.

Yet on Feb. 14, 1871, it was unclear whether Parrish would be the College's future hero or some sort of aberration in its history. For, that day, his reluctant resignation was accepted by the Board of Managers. It was "not the happiest lot for one who had done so much to bring Swarthmore to life," writes Richard Walton in *Swarthmore College: An Informal History*.

Elected president in May, 1865, Parrish's "most crucial job, as many a college president has learned since, was to raise money," observes Walton. He crisscrossed eastern Pennsylvania on horseback, seeking "subscriptions" to the College, spurned by many in the weary days after the end of the Civil War. After three frustrating years, the canvass was still \$50,000 short of its goal when Willets stepped forward with what today would be called a "challenge grant"—\$25,000 from a group of New York Friends. Within 6 weeks, the match had been achieved, and the opening of Swarthmore, then one of the very few private coeducational colleges in America, was assured. The building that now bears Edward Parrish's name was erected, and the College opened on Nov. 10, 1869.

The College's early liberality—and per-



FRIENDS HISTORICAL LIBRARY

Edward Parrish rode on horseback across Pennsylvania in search of "subscriptions" to finance the building that now bears his name. Yet Swarthmore's first president was forced out of office soon after the College opened.

haps Parrish's own—may have been his undoing as president. When asked by Martha Tyson about reports of what she termed "promiscuous intercourse" (she meant the social, not the sexual, kind) between the sexes, Parrish wrote back to

assure Tyson that "their intercourse is almost entirely under the eye of watchful teachers and caretakers" but went on to assert that a certain amount of mixing of the sexes was a positive effect of coeducation. As noted in *Swarthmore College: An Informal History*, Parrish wrote:

The mental attrition of the classroom is especially favorable to students forming a just estimate of each other's capacity, and thus losing false ideas of perfection in each other, the frequent source of romantic attachments. Constantly subjected to artless association and competition, they seldom exhibit that unnatural constraint and coyness which distinguish the unaccustomed intercourse of boys and girls, when first thrown together in what is called society.

Yet conflicts over the enforcement of College regulations reached a climax during the 1870–1871 school year. Family papers recently donated to the Friends Historical Library by members of the Parrish family document the conflict between President Parrish, who believed that student conduct was less a matter of rules and more personal influence and guidance, and Professor Edward Magill, who unilaterally expelled a student for behavior problems without Parrish's approval. The Board of Managers supported Magill, and Parrish soon quit.

Parrish wrote in his journal of being left in a state of melancholy after all he had done to make the dream of Swarthmore a reality. He died in September 1872 of typhus, which he had contracted that year in the Oklahoma Territory, where he had been sent by President Ulysses Grant to arbitrate difficulties among the Indians there.

—Jeffrey Lott



BOB KRIST

Parrish Challenge Goal: \$4 Million by December

Renovations of Parrish Hall are continuing as Swarthmore opens for the fall semester. One of the two new elevators is installed and working, and the post office has relocated to its new space in the former Admissions Office. Members of the admissions staff are scheduled to return to Parrish in October; by year's end, the project should be finished.

The College is also working to complete another vital part of the Parrish project—the fund-raising needed to claim a 1-year, \$1 million challenge grant from the Kresge Foundation. To be successful, Swarthmore must raise \$4 million in gifts and pledges to the project by Dec. 31.

At the end of the 2004–2005 fiscal year on June 30, the Kresge challenge had attracted \$1.92 million—just under half the goal with half of the time remaining. By mid-July, the fund had passed the \$2 million mark.

“To use an expression common to our Society, we think the committee [was] favored to select so eligible a site. Apparently plenty of stone for the foundation a few rods off, a brickyard within a short distance, and a railroad station at the lower part of the farm, and everything they wish that cannot be procured on or near there can easily be brought from Philadelphia.”

—Isaac Hicks, *Friends Intelligencer*, June 17, 1865

Post Office Moves to Former Admissions Space

CAN YOU REMEMBER YOUR COMBINATION?

As they returned to campus in late August, students lined up at a new window in a new post office to get the combinations to their new mailboxes. It's an old school-opening ritual, but this time, the mailboxes—and the post office itself—really were new.

The old Parrish Hall post office, located at the west end of the building, closed on July 22, reopening in a new space on July 26, in part of the former Admissions Office. The new facility includes an expanded loading dock, package storage and mail-sorting space, a new service window, and nearly 1,500 brand-new mailboxes. When all of the Parrish renovations are completed, the service window will look out on a student lounge that will offer daily newspapers, computers, and a flat-screen television.



BOB KRIST



ELEFTHERIOS KOSTANS

Old: Brass mailbox doors served as a student's window to the world for most of the 20th century. *New:* Anodized aluminum—and no windows—but larger boxes and more of them. The old brass doors will be preserved in a display outside the new Parrish Hall post office.

Post office supervisor Vincent Vagnozzi, who worked with architects to plan the new space, says the increased number of boxes will “significantly reduce the number of students who will have to share a mailbox—from more than 300 down to about 15.” Sharing of boxes will also be made easier by the larger size of the new boxes, which Vagnozzi says are about twice the volume of the old ones. “The only thing missing,” he says, “are the windows with the red and black numbered decals.”

The antique post office boxes that served the College for most of the 20th century were not thrown in a Dumpster, however. Space has been set aside outside the new post office/lounge for a display that will preserve the memory of the old mailboxes. A juried art competition is being held to choose a design for the display; installation is expected by Alumni Weekend 2006.

—Jeffrey Lott

The Garthen Spirit

HOW "GREEN SPIRITUALITY" CAN INFORM
THE ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENT

By Mark Wallace

Photographs by Eleftherios Kostans





The following essay is adapted from *Finding God in the Singing River: Christianity, Spirit, Nature* (Fortress Press, Minneapolis, 2005) by Associate Professor of Religion Mark Wallace. In the book, Wallace seeks to “explore the promise of Christianity as an earth-centered, body-loving religion” that promises to “heal human beings’

exploitative environmental habits through its nature-based teachings concerning the enfleshed presence of God in all things.”

“In particular,” he writes in the book’s introduction, “I want to retrieve a central but neglected Christian theme—the idea of God as carnal Spirit who imbues all things—as the linchpin for forging a green spirituality responsive to the environmental needs of our time.” For Wallace, God is an “Earth Spirit” who “has the potential both to bring meaningful renewal to many persons and to invigorate public policy discussions about how to ensure the well-being of all members of our planet home.”

Wallace also seeks to “recover the Spirit’s female identity,” arguing that early Christians “consistently spoke of the Spirit as the motherly, regenerative breath and power of God within creation.” Throughout the book, Wallace refers to the Spirit as “she.” In the same manner, Wallace finds in contemporary Neopaganism a “source of vision” that is also feminine and earth-centered, calling on Christianity to “repair its relationship with Paganism and overcome its historic antipathy to the body and nature.”

He explores the “deep ecology” philosophy, wherein “the natural world has intrinsic and not merely instrumental value: all life is worthwhile in and of itself independent of its usefulness to the human community.” Deep ecology “stresses an attitude of equal regard for all life-forms as the highest good humans can seek to live by in their interactions with the natural world.” He sees a sympathetic relationship between deep ecology and “green Christianity,” wherein “nature is an integrated whole, and when I live in harmony with my surroundings I live in harmony with myself and rekindle the spark of God that is within me and all other beings.”

He concludes the book’s introduction with the following: “Green Christian spirituality envisions God as present in all things and the source of our attempt to develop caring relationships with other life-forms. This perspective signals a fundamental reevaluation of Christian themes.... The hope of this book is that readers will discover a new sense of intimacy with God and the earth through finding traces of the Spirit in all of creation.”

—Jeffrey Lott

Green Spirituality, Brownfields, and Wilderness Recovery

O

n a recent visit to the west end of Chester, Pa., a few miles from where I live in Swarthmore, the first thing I noticed was the smell. Waves of noxious fumes enveloped me like the stench of rotting meat. Next, I felt the bone-jarring rumble of giant 18-

wheel trash trucks from all over the Eastern seaboard, roaring down the residential streets I was walking, bringing tons of waste that I knew contained everything from toxic chemicals and contaminated soil to sewage sludge and body parts. Their destination was a line of giant trash processing plants belching putrid smoke—a waste-industrial complex interspersed among the daily comings and goings of Chester residents.

Children and families who live and work in Chester are awash in the fumes, noise, and pollution generated by waste treatment facilities situated on the immediate boundary of their homes, schools, and churches. My visit underscored a sad truth: Chester, like other poor American towns and cities, has become a corporate sacrifice zone serving capitalized interests of the waste management industry.



I began to wonder what role the Spirit can play in confronting environmental problems in residential areas such as Chester. What is the role of green spirituality in combating the degradation of the earth? I think that the promise of Christian faith for our time is grounded in the central biblical image of God as Earth Spirit—a compassionate divine force within the biosphere that indwells earth community and continually labors to maintain the integrity of all forms of life. In green spirituality, God is not a dispassionate sky god far removed from earthly concerns but rather the Earth God who lives underfoot and makes holy the encircling earth that protects and nourishes all things.

To see oneself as a blessed recipient of the Spirit's daily bread is to feel motivated to enter the political fray and work toward healthy earth-centered living, whether in developed places or in wilderness areas. To know that the Spirit maintains the natural systems on which all life depends is to be inspired to labor on behalf of the integrity of these natural systems. To believe that all life is God's gift is to feel empowered to work toward environmental healing and environmental justice in all different types of degraded communities, human and nonhuman. The Spirit maintains the integrity of the lifeweb in urban areas and in forests and grasslands alike.

The cry for environmental justice is a critical issue in our time. But contemporary environmental thinking and activism is openly divided on the question of how best to answer the cry for earth justice. That is, should energy and resources be put toward rebuilding human communities that have suffered from environmental abuse, or should the emphasis be placed on preserving the integrity of open spaces not yet degraded by human settlement? Although the two concerns are not mutually exclusive, there is considerable tension between them. My hope in this essay is to consider how green spirituality, as a powerful force for enabling social change, offers resources for bringing the two sides together around a commitment



Five waste-treatment plants have been built on a concentrated site near the Delaware River in Chester, Pa. Two other plants have construction permits pending. Residents of the nearby low-income neighborhood suffer high rates of asthma, lead poisoning, and other health problems, which some researchers have associated with the facilities. Some residents have opposed expansion of the waste-treatment site, calling their neighborhood a "toxic sacrifice zone." Yet despite degradation of the environment, natural beauty—and the spirit it represents—persist in Chester.



Chester resident Angela Logue and her 3-week-old son, Tyler, live across the street from the Delaware County Waste Treatment Facility, where all solid waste from Delaware County is incinerated. When asked how she felt about living so near this facility, she replied, "Where else do I have to go?"

to preserving the lifeweb that binds all things to one another.

Two sides, therefore, make up the global environmental movement today: so-called antitoxics, who are organized against environmental hazards; and conservation activists, who work toward the preservation and restoration of biodiversity in wilderness areas. Both recognize that the consumerist logic of the market-state—"grow or die"—will continue the degradation of clean water and air, animal well-being, and human flourishing. As such, both movements challenge the American capitalist idea that the pursuit of enlightened self-interest somehow guarantees that all members of the body politic will achieve a reasonable standard of living in relatively healthy home and work environments.

But the two camps disagree in other fundamental ways. The antitoxics movement has its origins in the plight of human communities—urban, suburban, and rural—precariously situated in close proximity to health hazards such as waste dumps, polluted water supplies, contaminated soil sites, and toxic storage plants. The conservationist movement, on the other hand, focuses primarily on the exigency to preserve ecological richness and vitality in unspoiled bioregions that have not been badly damaged by the influx of human populations.

In light of this division within contemporary green populism, what role can an environmentally rich spirituality play in healing this breach? Can antitoxics and champions of wilderness preservation find common ground in a "sustainable spirituality," to use Charlene Spretnak's felicitous phrase, that seeks both to fight social injustice and to protect nature for its own sake? Sustainable spirituality—or what I have called green spirituality—is an earthen spiritual vision concerning the deep interrelationships of all life-forms on the planet and the concomitant ethical ideal of preserving the integrity of these relationships through one's religious and political practice. Sustainable spirituality offers its practitioners a powerfully useful root metaphor—the image of all life as organically interconnected—that can enable a fresh reappraisal of the debate between advocates for environmental justice and biocentric conservationists.

In light of its alarmingly bad public health, Chester would appear to be the last place to build a constellation of hazardous facilities.

Toxic Sacrifice Zones and the Quest for Justice

It should not come as a surprise that many local economies in urban and rural America today are dependent upon the processing of toxic wastes. The waste-management industry offers a quick fix to chronic poverty and instability in declining cities and neighborhoods that can no longer attract government and other private investment. In economically distressed communities, the promise of a stabilized tax base, improved physical infrastructure, and jobs for underemployed residents is almost impossible to resist. The price for allowing the storage and treatment of biohazardous materials in one's community may be long-term environmental problems, but people in the grip of poverty and joblessness have few options. Sometimes, their very survival, materially speaking, is contingent upon the construction of a trash incinerator or chemical treatment plant in their neighborhood.

The problems and prospects of antitoxics campaigns in blighted urban areas are graphically evident in the resistance to a series of waste-management plants in Chester, an impoverished, predominantly African American community in Delaware County, a largely white suburb of Philadelphia. Chester's median family income is 45 percent lower than the rest of Delaware County; its poverty rate is 25 percent, more than three times the rate in the rest of Delaware County; and its unemployment rate is 30 percent. Chester has the highest infant mortality rate and the highest percentage of low-birthweight newborns in the state. In light of its alarmingly bad public health, Chester would appear to be the last place to build a constellation of hazardous facilities.

Nevertheless, five waste-treatment plants have been built on a concentrated site near the Delaware River, surrounded by homes and parks. The facilities include the American Ref-Fuel trash-to-steam incinerator; the Delcora sewage treatment plant; the Clean Metal recycling plant; the Thermal Pure Systems medical-waste autoclave (which is not operating, at least for the time being); and the Kimberly-Clark Tissue Corporation's combined paper mill and waste-processing facility, which burns a variety of petrochemicals and now hopes to incinerate millions of old tires a year to generate tire-derived fuel. Other waste-treatment plants devoted to treating polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and other types of contaminated soil have also applied for construction permits in Chester. At this time, the verdict is out as to whether the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection will grant the necessary permissions.

According to Maryanne Voller, writing in *Audubon* magazine, the clustering of waste industries only a few yards from a large residential area has made worse the high rate of asthma and other respiratory and health problems in Chester. It has brought about an infestation of rodents, the presence in the neighborhood of hundreds of trucks at all hours of the day, soot and dust covering even the insides of people's homes, and waves of noxious odors that have made life unbearable at times. A landmark health study by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) found that lead poisoning is a significant health problem for most of Chester children, that toxic air emissions have raised the specter of cancer to 2.5 times greater than the average risk for area residents, and that the fish in

**God is not a dispassionate sky god
but rather the Earth God who
lives underfoot and makes holy
the encircling earth that protects
and nourishes all things.**

Chester waters are badly contaminated with PCBs from current and previous industrial pollution.

The EPA study made public what many Chester residents have long known: The excessive dumping of industrial and municipal wastes in Chester has undermined the health and well-being of its population. Chester is a stunning example of environmental racism. Voller and others have reported that all municipal solid waste in Delaware County is burned at the American Ref-Fuel incinerator; 90 percent of the county's sewage is treated at the Delcora plant; and, until recently, close to 100 tons of hospital waste per day from a half-dozen nearby states were being sterilized at the

Thermal Pure plant. As Jerome Balter, a Philadelphia environmental lawyer puts it, "When Delaware County passes an act that says all of the waste has to come to the city of Chester, that is environmental racism." Or, as Peter Kostmayer, former congressman and head of the EPA's mid-Atlantic region, says, high levels of pollution in Chester would "not have happened if this were Bryn Mawr, Haverford, or Swarthmore. I think we have to face the fact that the reason this happened is because this city is largely—though not all—African American, and a large number of its residents are people of low income."

In other words, Chester has become a local "sacrifice zone" (a term coined by Carolyn Merchant in her book *Radical Ecology: The Search for a Livable World*), where disproportionate pollution from its waste-industrial complex is tolerated because of the promise of economic revitalization. But the promises of dozens of jobs and major funds for the immediate areas around the existing toxics industries have never materialized. Indeed, of the \$20 million the American Ref-Fuel incinerator pays to local governments in taxes, only \$2 million goes to Chester while \$18 million goes to Delaware County.

Delaware County's surrounding middle-class, white neighborhoods would never allow the systematic overexposure of their citizens to such a toxics complex. The health and economic impact of even one of the facilities now housed in Chester would likely be regarded as too high of a risk.

Many in Chester have tried to fight this exercise in environmental apartheid. The Chester Residents Concerned for Quality Living, a small storefront community organization, formerly led by activist (or, as she prefers, "reactivist") Zulene Mayfield, has used nonviolent resistance tactics—mass protests, staged truck blockades, monitoring of emissions levels, and protracted court actions—to block the expansion of the waste complex.

In opposing a new permit for the proposed contaminated soil remediation plant, former Chester Mayor Barbara Bohannon-Shepard said: "Chester should not and will not serve as a dumping ground. A dumping ground for what no other borough, no other township, or no other city will accept. Yes, Chester needs the taxes,



Fran Mays (left) and his father Sonny have operated a neighborhood business in Chester for nearly 60 years. Their famous water-ice stand was moved across the street following a recent project to widen Second Street to accommodate heavy truck traffic associated with nearby waste-treatment facilities.



Living in Chester is like living in any other place: People have roots in community, family, and spiritual practice. Ebony Gordon (left) and her mother Linda hug on Third Street. An annual revival/barbecue weekend held in August at the New Jerusalem Church of Chester is called "Healing the City: Life and Love."

Chester needs the jobs. But Chester also needs to improve its image and not be a killing field."

Mayfield told me that she sees herself as waging an impossible, long-term spiritual war, a sort of David-and-Goliath conflict. Sadly, she was not confident that she would be successful. She told me that she understands the spiritual foundations of her singular struggle as a reworking of her Methodist upbringing. The religious foundation for her work is the basis for her belief in the inherent right to be free from ecological degradation—a right shared by all God's children living together on this sacred earth. Yet Mayfield found little interest among local religious leaders in combating the waste complex. Chester clergy, she said, are committed to so many other important issues that the embrace of the environmental problem seems too much of a stretch.

What role can green spirituality play in the struggle against environmental racism in areas such as Chester? People have become inured to the gradual environmental degradation of their

home and work environments, and, most likely, consider the development of occasional toxic "sacrifice zones" and "killing fields" to be a tragic but necessary result of modern technological life and its attendant creature comforts. In the capitalist market model, it is Gospel that every person has the right to pursue his or her own material self-interests—and if some people are better able to do this because of their "natural" advantages based on family, national origin, education, or socioeconomic class, then it follows that others will be disadvantaged and marginalized in the "normal" social struggle for increased wealth, security, and power.

Green spirituality challenges this whole set of assumptions by affirming instead that all persons are fundamentally equal and that everyone has the right to family stability and meaningful work in a healthy environment regardless of their racial, cultural, or economic position. Moreover, it affirms the interdependence of all persons with each other—indeed, of all species with each other. Green spirituality testifies to the bond of unity that unites all of God's children together on a sacred earth—in contradistinction to the privileged ideal of maximizing self-interest.

In the struggle for environmental justice, green spirituality can serve to motivate all persons to live responsibly on the earth. It empowers antitoxics to go out and fight injustice by offering them spiritually potent visions of an interconnected world that can set free a primal sense of identification with all forms of life—that can set free, as early American theologian Jonathan Edwards wonderfully put it, the union of heart with Being as such. By bearing witness to the underlying unity of all things, green spirituality can sustain communities of resistance over the long haul.

Deep Ecology and Wilderness Activism

Alongside the antitoxics' concern with safeguarding human communities from industrial polluters, the other wing of the environmental movement works to protect and preserve wild places and endangered species from human incursion. In essence, the modern wilderness preservation movement is a practical application of the philosophy of "deep ecology." First formulated by Arne Naess in a 1973 article using that name, deep ecology articulates a spiritual vision of nature as the lifeweb where every ecosystem and its members are bearers of equal and intrinsic worth.

Opposed to human chauvinism, deep ecology is biocentric rather than anthropocentric: human beings are co-dependent members of the biotic community rather than centers of supreme value independent from (and over and against) the natural world. Consider how Vietnamese monk and ec mystic Thích Nhất Hạnh articulates our primeval co-belonging with the vital support systems that keep us alive:

Without trees, we cannot have people, therefore trees and people inter-are. We are trees, and air, bushes and clouds. If trees cannot survive, humankind is not going to survive either. We get sick because we have damaged our own environment, and we are in mental anguish because we are so far away from our true mother, Mother Nature.

Deep ecology and rain-forest activist John Seed makes a similar point regarding his—and, by implication, other human beings'—aboriginal kinship with natural systems:

When humans investigate and see through their layers of anthropocentric self-cherishing, a most profound change in consciousness begins to take place.

Alienation subsides. The human is no longer an outsider, apart. Your humanness is then recognized as being merely the most recent stage of your existence.... You start to get in touch with yourself as mammal, as vertebrate, as a species only recently emerged from the rain forest....

What is described here should not be seen as merely intel-

lectual. The intellect is one entry point to the process outlined, and the easiest one to communicate. For some people, however, this change of perspective follows from actions on behalf of mother Earth.

"I am protecting the rain forest" develops to "I am part of the rain forest protecting myself. I am that part of the rain forest recently emerged into thinking."

The insights of deep ecology provide the underlying warrant for popular conservationist efforts to renew endangered bioregions in order to promote ecological richness and diversity. If I am the rain forest or the watershed or the grassland recently emerged into thinking and action, then preservation of wild spaces is preservation for all life-forms—myself included. The moral rule that results from this biotic kinship is variously formulated as the "duty of non-interference" or the "principle of minimum impact."

Deep ecology philosophy animates much of grassroots environmentalism today—including some of the more radical environmental organizations such as Earth First! and its offshoots, the Earth Liberation Front (ELF) and the Wildlands Project. Militant greens have appropriated the species egalitarianism of deep ecology and turned this philosophy into an ideological wedge to support controversial and sometimes illegal forays into saving wild places, beginning with "monkey wrenching" and including more violent acts of arson and eco-sabotage.

In my mind, radical eco-defense has taken an ugly turn in recent years, at a high price for both the perpetrators of eco-violence and their targets. One ELF leader's exhortation to "pick up a lighter or pick up a gun" strikes me as a call to step over the line that divides green civil disobedience from anarchy and chaos for its own sake. I do not think that hearts and minds will be won for eco-defense by verbal incitements to violence, but I also believe that I understand



Vacant lots fill with trees, flowers bloom on rusting fences, and the blue water of the Delaware beckons. Nature's hand is everywhere in Chester. "Green spirituality testifies to the bond of unity that unites all of God's children together on a sacred earth," Wallace writes.



Green spirituality is holistic, prophetic, and interventionist in the struggle against the forces that have degraded both human and nonhuman environments.



the pain that animates this kind of rhetoric. For eco-radicals, the continued degradation of the ecology of the planet fuels anger and hopelessness that cannot be assuaged by incremental measures.

The other break-off faction of Earth First! is more conservative and mediational. The Wildlands Project—an ambitious network of activists and scientists working to establish an interconnected system of wilderness parks and preserves across much of the wild and underdeveloped spaces of the Americas—places its emphasis on wilderness recovery instead of wilderness defense. Angry tactics have been replaced by the discourse of earth science and public policy studies. The Wildlands Project is seeking long-term political solutions to declining biodiversity in wilderness areas, making common cause with other pro-wilderness groups across the political spectrum.

Yet the goals of contemporary grassroots preservationists are much more ambitious than the century-old conservationist ideals that sought to set aside scenic wild places for the sake of human recreation and edification. Today, the concern is with the preservation of entire ecosystems to sustain the health of the planet as a whole. What distinguishes contemporary preservation from its conservationist precursors is its plea for the establishment of large nature preserves as nurseries for comprehensive biodiversity without which, its proponents argue, diverse life on the planet as we know it will be seriously eroded—if not extinguished altogether.

What is the relevance of green spirituality to contemporary conservation efforts? Initially, it seems that religion and conservationism have little in common. Indeed, one of the sources of disagreement that led to the split among Earth First! members in the first place—the split that paved the way for both the ELF and the Wildlands Project—was the contention that the radical environmental movement had been co-opted by spiritually oriented, social-justice types who were blunting the hard edge of the movement's originally uncompromising anti-industrial message. Yet I think that both militant and mainstream forms of wilderness advocacy are deeply spiritual movements at their core.

Radical grassroots nature activism represents the tactical edge of deep ecology philosophy. As such, contemporary direct-action biodiversity efforts—from violent eco-sabotage to transcontinental wilderness recovery strategies—are animated by a deeply felt spiritual awareness that all of life, human and nonhuman, is profoundly interdependent, has intrinsic and not merely instrumental value, and should not, therefore, be subordinated to the growth needs of greedy capitalist societies. I label this intuitive perspective “spiritual” in this context because its exponents—implicitly or explicitly,

and whether they self-identify as religious or spiritual or not—are committed to preserving the integrity of life as an ultimate value. Whatever may or may not be said about its scientific merits (though I do not doubt its conservation biology credentials) deep ecology, at its core, is a spiritual vision of the highest order concerning the organic wholeness and biotic equality of all life forms on the planet. Insofar as contemporary conservationism is politically applied deep ecology, it is a bearer of green spirituality to a culture that hungers for authentic religion in an age of corporate development and the degradation of our fragile earth community.

Green spirituality has the resources for forging rapprochement between these two movements by articulating the connective worldview that is logically entailed by both forms of environmental populism. I am not arguing that this spiritual worldview is self-consciously understood as such by adherents of both movements but rather that it is the mind-set implied by the commitment to the integrity and sanctity of life shared by both groups. This shared, connective worldview is holistic in its vision of all life as codependent and interconnected; it is prophetic in its despair over the earth's declining biological carrying capacity; and it is interventionist in its struggle against global market forces that have degraded human and nonhuman environments alike.

Rapprochement between the two movements, therefore, need not entail agreement on all issues, including the question of biotic equality. As long as members of both movements can recognize their tacitly held—if not always explicitly articulated—commitment to the unity and integrity of living things, then the ground has been laid for mediating the differing stances the two groups sometimes take in relation to the interests of the other group. If, then, this common ground can be secured—that is, a unitary vision of all organisms and entities as interdependent, if not always coequal members of an organic whole—then the response to the question whether environmental justice or wilderness recovery should be one's primary focus is a response that is tactical, strategic, and contextual—not deep-down philosophical. The problem, then, is not one of disagreement over the fundamental orientation needed to combat further ecocide but over the political focus and practical measures necessary for enacting this core vision of sustainable eco-communities, human and nonhuman alike.

Mark Wallace's book Finding God in the Singing River is available at the Swarthmore College Bookstore, (610) 328-7756, or on-line at <http://bookstore.swarthmore.edu>. Bibliographic references for this article are linked to its Web version at www.swarthmore.edu/bulletin.

Where's Justin?

THE PIONEER PERSONAL BLOGGER IS KEEPING A LOWER PROFILE ON THE 'NET.

Justin Hall's ['98] decision this year to stop keeping a daily blog made headlines, especially in media circles. (A blog, or Web log, is a sort of Internet diary that, unlike the one you kept under lock and key in your bedroom, is open for the world to see.) How could "the founding father of personal blogging," according to *The New York Times Magazine*, give it up? And to do what?

Well, Hall is still writing. His freelance articles have appeared in *The New York Times*, *The South China Morning Post*, *Rolling Stone*, *Salon*, and *Wired*, among others. Now a M.F.A. candidate in the University of Southern California (USC) Interactive Media Division, Hall took time from his summer internship at Creative Artists Agency (CAA) for an instant-messenger chat with *Bulletin* staff writer [Alisa Giardinelli](#) about his decision and plans for the future. Below are some excerpts from the conversation.

JH(1:38:29): there are still many geeks with good ideas making games

JH(1:38:36): but there are also people who want games based on films

AG(1:38:39): are you one?

JH(1:38:59): I'm not sure what I am!

JH(1:39:12): I went to graduate school I think to give myself a chance to explore and learn new tools

JH(1:39:20): to see what other kinds of stories I might tell

JH(1:39:38): and now that I've been at CAA and USC for a while, I wonder if I might try facilitating storytelling rather than telling my own stories

JH(1:39:52): I tried doing that while I was at Swat

JH(1:40:04): I taught monthly classes on web publishing between 1995 and 1998 when I graduated

JH(1:40:10): to encourage more people to publish on-line

JH(1:40:16): now I want to see more diversity in video games

JH(1:40:30): video games tend to have too many space marines, too many athletes and soldiers, etc.

JH(1:40:40): not too many troubled teenagers or energetic old folks

JH(1:40:46): or just interesting common folk

AG(1:40:52): is this a frontier of sorts?

JH(1:40:58): I believe it is!

JH(1:41:10): video games have the power to allow us to visit other perspectives

JH(1:41:21): so we should harness the power of video games to allow us to experience each other

JH(1:41:26): or people outside of our comfort zone

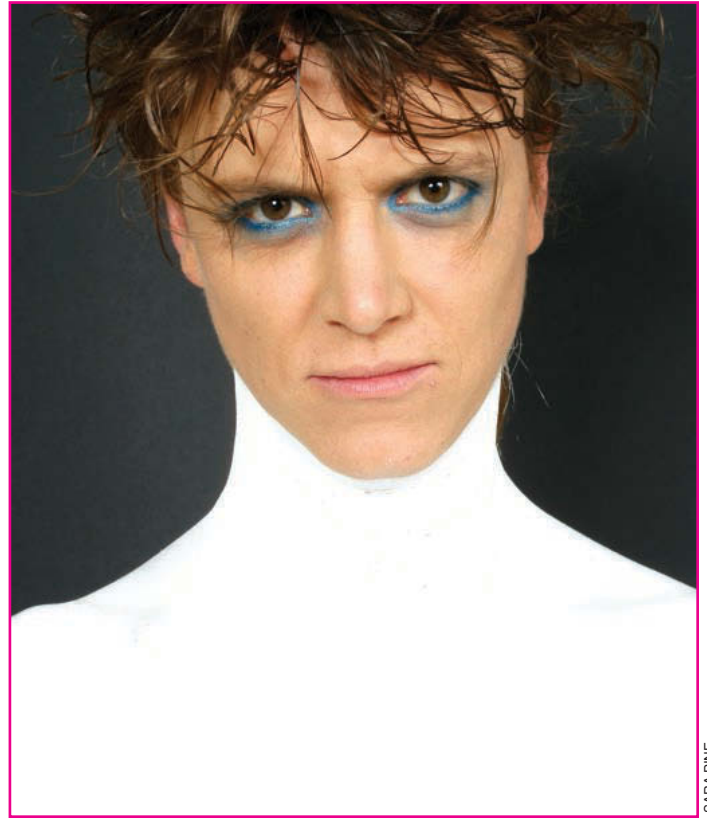
JH(1:41:38): to promote compassion

AG(1:42:01): are they the best way to accomplish those things you think?

JH(1:42:26): not necessarily

JH(1:42:39): but video games can make for riveting educational tools

JH(1:43:03): I think exploring personal storytelling or diversity in video game content is a good way to push the useful potential of



"I used to have an idea, like, clean my office, and then I'd write about it, take pictures, and make a page. It would take 3 hours, and my office wouldn't be any cleaner!"

video games to teach people

JH(1:43:08): to engage learners

JH(1:45:49): and I think it foreshadows an increasing number of experiments that will allow humans to explore situations, to learn with lesser consequences

JH(1:46:07): I mean, experimenting socially on your friends can be difficult

JH(1:46:13): I tried that with my web site maybe a little bit

AG(1:46:31): yeah, I heard that didn't always go so well :-)

JH(1:46:38): hah yeah

AG(1:46:53): so are you looking to make things like this more commercial?

JH(1:48:30): someday, maybe. I haven't been very good at making things commercial Alisa.

JH(1:48:39): I think my talents might lie more in making things

JH(1:48:43): or experimenting with things

JH(1:48:49): and then sharing some vision for what's possible

JH(1:48:57): teaching people to do things

AG(1:51:02): what surprises you about the current "blog-sphere"

these days, if anything?

JH(1:53:14): how popular it has become!

JH(1:53:19): so many people are writing now

JH(1:53:30): from all over the world, all ages, so many perspectives

JH(1:53:32): it's not just for geeks

JH(1:53:42): for media-obsessed young white males

JH(1:53:45): that's awesome!

AG(1:55:28): you've written that you'll still post, just not as often.

AG(1:55:39): has it been a hard habit to break?

JH(1:55:55): I haven't posted in months actually

JH(1:56:01): it is a hard habit to give up!

AG(1:56:09): do you miss it?

JH(1:56:10): regular self-expression amidst a circle of minds

JH(1:56:12): sure I do

JH(1:56:21): I haven't found a ready replacement creative activity

JH(1:56:26): I have been writing less

JH(1:56:33): I write longer letters to my family now

JH(1:56:42): but there's only so much they want to hear

JH(1:56:49): I think it's productive though—

JH(1:57:03): all this energy I used to spend analyzing myself and musing over things

JH(1:57:12): I conserve now or focus on the world in front of me

JH(1:57:19): I used to have an idea, like, clean my office

JH(1:57:37): and then I'd write about it, take pictures, and make a page. It would take 3 hours

JH(1:57:44): and my office wouldn't be any cleaner!

AG(1:57:49): crazy

JH(1:57:57): I do enjoy being able to look back on my memories and details of my life;

JH(1:58:04): most of the time, they're funny, and I'm glad to have the info—souvenirs

JH(1:58:17): but I figure it's a good thing to try a different way of life

AG(1:58:29): why make the change when you did?

AG(1:58:42): was it turning 3-o?

JH(1:58:51): I think it was meeting a girl I liked

JH(1:58:55): I wanted to be intimate with her

JH(1:59:01): and she said my web site was a barrier to intimacy

JH(1:59:05): also, I was stuck

JH(1:59:15): I wanted to write about her because I was in love, and I was used to emptying my heart on-line

JH(1:59:21): but I wanted to protect her identity

JH(1:59:25): so I wrote about her vaguely

JH(1:59:56): and a few of my readers said, "WTF is this—you've fallen in love with a shadow, with someone who doesn't exist. You're a flighty, desperate flake."

JH(2:00:21): and I couldn't believe it—by protecting the identity of someone I wanted to be close to, I wasn't pleasing my readers

JH(2:01:21): and many folks thought I was becoming less sincere

JH(2:01:28): and, I guess, in a way I felt like I was becoming less sincere

JH(2:01:39): so I signed off rather than try to limit myself to inoffensive writing

JH(2:01:49): that seemed like the choice—I could make my blog about technology and vague things

JH(2:01:58): and stay away from the interpersonal matters that stimulated me most deeply

JH(2:02:03): or I could just pull out altogether

JH(2:02:16): and see what happened to all the energy I'd been putting on-line before

JH(2:02:18): that scared me

JH(2:02:23): and so I decided to try it

AG(2:02:54): so is it a grand irony that you started posting to connect and be intimate with people all over the place and then pulled back for some "old-fashioned" intimacy?

JH(2:03:13): it would be a grand irony if human beings were unified consistent people

JH(2:03:30): I think when I was 19, through to when I was living in Japan in my late 20s, posting on-line saved me in so many ways

JH(2:03:43): Swat was a stimulating place, but I couldn't find my ideal technology-freak community there

JH(2:03:52): I had to go to San Francisco to find that, during summers and semesters off

JH(2:03:58): and the web was my bridge to that community

JH(2:04:18): and when I was in Japan, writing about my life in Japan gave me a great way to stay in touch with my community at home

JH(2:05:06): so now I'm 30 years old with a lover I'm stimulated by and I am pulling in to work on my home life

JH(2:05:17): it's not like I've disappeared from the web though

JH(2:05:22): I'm less navel gazing

...

AG(2:22:53): any ideas for your thesis?

JH(2:23:08): I think mobile phones have immense potential for multiplayer games

JH(2:23:13): it would be fun to explore that

JH(2:23:38): what kind of play would you want to engage in, casually, with the people on your contact list?

JH(2:25:05): what if you could send a single move in a game to them?

JH(2:25:10): like all you did together was play chess

JH(2:25:13): one move at a time

JH(2:25:48): it wouldn't require typing, it wouldn't require talking, it wouldn't require a lot of time

JH(2:25:53): but it could be an expression of your personality

JH(2:25:58): and a chance to share time/space with someone

JH(2:26:13): and maybe the game takes months

JH(2:26:21): but you can think of yourself as playing through these games with your friends

JH(2:28:07): "social games for mobile phones"

AG(2:29:59): sounds good, especially for people far from you

JH(2:30:50): precisely!

JH(2:30:59): and then imagine all the 200 million people with mobile phones in China

JH(2:31:16): what if you randomly ended up being a phone pal with some farmer there because he loved poker?

...

JH(2:41:50): sometimes I'm happy not to know

JH(2:41:55): not to be writing out everything I think about it

JH(2:41:57): constantly 🌸

CHARTING THE Charters

FROM PHILADELPHIA TO BOSTON, SWARTHMORE-TRAINED EDUCATORS ARE PART OF A NEW MOVEMENT IN PUBLIC EDUCATION.

By Marcia Ringel

Illustrations by Alex Forbes

The new kid on the block in American education, the charter school, has drawn the enthusiasm and commitment of a growing number of Swarthmoreans without shedding controversies that have persisted since the first charter school opened 13 years ago. Although charter schools have many critics, proponents express an affinity for the philosophy and deregulation in this fresh version of public school. From Philadelphia to Boston—and around the country—some Swarthmore-trained educators consider charter schools a promising venue for revolutionizing American public education—one child at a time.

Charter schools differ enormously in style and quality. The best—representing disproportionately few, detractors say—share desirable features of good private schools: They're small, collegial, and attentive to each student's needs, with a sharp focus on academics and freedom to teach an innovative curriculum. Because charter schools are public schools, students pay nothing to attend. Yet a frequently cited concern is the cherry picking of committed students and parents from traditional district schools, leaving those who remain in worse shape than before. Each school gets most of the per-pupil taxpayer money that its students' district schools would have received if the students attended them instead. New charter schools, however, must find start-up funds without state aid; once a school is established, tax money, grants, and fund-raising can keep it going.

The charter school movement began with grassroots efforts by parents and teachers to serve inner-city students whose district schools had become neglectful, deficient, even dangerous—and, against expectations, to prepare them for college. The charter school movement, offering opportunities to reach students outside the customary setting and to participate in a historic social experiment, is often called a tool for social justice. Yet some charter schools are designed to attract special populations of academically or artistically talented students.

The charter of a charter school is a legally binding contract between those running the school—a principal and executive board, for example—and the entity authorizing the school's existence, usually the state or local school board. The charter, according to the U.S. Department of Education,

outlines the school's "mission, program, goals, students served, methods of assessment, and ways to measure success."

Unlike "test schools," which hold admissions tests, and magnet schools, which highlight a single area of endeavor (such as science or the performing arts) and screen applicants closely, charter

schools must accept all eligible students or conduct a lottery if applications exceed seats. (Waiting lists for the top charters can run into the thousands.) Unlike voucher programs, which give taxpayer money to any school—including parochial schools—that a student wishes to attend, charter schools are nonsectarian and inclusive. They must obey federal health, safety, and nondiscrimination laws, including those for disabilities. Resources for special education, athletics, transportation, and other aspects of standard district school life, however, are often reduced or lacking in charter schools, critics charge.

In exchange for complying with the charter, school leaders and teachers receive pedagogic autonomy. In addition, they may avoid the staffing regulations of district schools. In Pennsylvania, for example, only 75 percent of charter-school teachers must be pre-certified; the rest may complete certification on the job, an option that has fanned the ire of teachers' unions. Charter-school teachers, often young, tend to work long hours under 1-year contracts without pensions or other perks guaranteed to union members. Enthusiasts admit they willingly exchange job security and some benefits for independence from bureaucracy. (The unions want in. Last spring, the second-largest teachers' union in Massachusetts sent "please join us" letters to all 2,000 charter-school teachers in the state.)

"Accountability" is the catchword. If test scores are low or contractual goals go unmet, a charter school may swiftly be closed. In a few states, a number of charter schools have been shuttered, leaving students scrambling for a school to attend there the next fall.

Unchecked proliferation of charter schools is sorely straining many district

school budgets.

Some 20 percent of public school students in Kansas City, Mo., have taken their tax-money allocations to charter schools. Mushrooming charter schools forced St. Louis,

Detroit, and Tucson to close or consolidate district schools and dismiss thousands of educators. In Dayton, Ohio, 26 percent of public school students attended charter schools last year—the highest proportion in any American city—taking 36 percent of state school aid to charters and crippling plans to fix deteriorating district schools. Fourteen more were expected to open there this fall.

Enter the business community. At first, "education management organizations" (EMOs) contracted with local school districts to manage individual schools. With the charter-school explosion, EMOs expanded. In some states, EMOs may hold the charter for a school; in others, they may only manage it. By February 2004, 51 for-profit and not-for-profit companies were managing or administering schools enrolling 200,400 students in 28 states and the Dis-



LISA SMULYAN '76
PROFESSOR OF EDUCATION
SWARTHMORE COLLEGE



EVA TRAVERS
PROFESSOR OF EDUCATION
SWARTHMORE COLLEGE

tract of Columbia. Not surprisingly, the ownership and management of public education institutions by private business remain hotly debated.

GROWING MOVEMENT

The first charter school opened in St. Paul, Minn., in 1992. As of January 2005, nearly 3,400 charter schools offering traditional and nontraditional

groupings of grades pre-K to 12 were operating across the United States, serving some 685,000 of the nation's 50 million schoolchildren. A newer animal is the cyber charter school, instructing via computer at home. Only 10 states still lack charter-school laws, without which charter schools can't exist.

Pennsylvania's first charter school opened in 1997. During the 2004–2005 school year, the state had 109, including 11 cyber charter schools, enrolling about 45,000 students, or 2.3 percent of the state's projected total public school enrollment. Last year, nearly half (52) of all charter schools in Pennsylvania were in Philadelphia.

Thirteen years into the experiment, the big question is: Are charter schools working? The standard way to measure the success of charter schools is to compare their students' test scores with those at district schools. On average, says Lisa Smulyan '76, professor of educational studies at Swarthmore, "charter schools aren't making much of a difference in test scores"—but, she adds, scores aren't everything. Perhaps more to the point: Which schools do students attend after graduation? How can you assess intangibles such as good citizenship, learning to follow instructions and complete tasks, and feeling like a better person for having attended the school?

Apples-and-oranges issues make charter–district comparisons extremely difficult, notes Paul Hill, director of the National Charter Research Center at the University of Washington's Center on Reinventing Public Education. Conclusions remain elusive, he writes in *Education Week*, the leading K-12 publication: "Any claim that one study proves or refutes the claims of charter school proponents is surely wrong."

Professor of Educational Studies Eva Travers, who teaches urban

education and educational policy, was once critical of charters as a whole; she now

acknowledges that some are excellent. Charter

schools, she believes, can provide "a very good alternative" to poor district schools for urban children whose parents can't afford private school or a move to the suburbs. Yet many charter schools in urban districts, she warns, are no better, and sometimes worse, than district schools there.

An imaginary trip up Route I-95 from Swarthmore to Boston and Cambridge by way of Philadelphia and New York will highlight the experiences and views of 11 Swarthmore graduates working at charter schools.

HOW CHARTER SCHOOLS WORK

WHO MAY START A CHARTER SCHOOL?

Regulations vary by state. The range of permissible sponsors can be wide. In Pennsylvania, for example, eligible applicants include "individuals, parents, teachers, nonsectarian institutions of higher education, museums, nonsectarian not-for-profits, corporations, associations, or any combination thereof." Long, detailed applications are typically required. Most charter school founders are grassroots organizations of parents, teachers, and community members; entrepreneurs; or existing schools converting to charter status, according to the U.S. Department of Education.

WHO PAYS FOR CHARTER SCHOOLS?

Taxpayers, grants, and private funding. Students' families pay nothing to attend charter schools, which, because they are public schools, receive per-pupil funding—although sometimes less than district schools—from the school district in which each child lives. Charter schools may obtain additional financial support through grants and fund-raising. Corporations that run charter schools may provide more funding from their own coffers.

WHO MAY ATTEND CHARTER SCHOOLS?

School size is limited; the average number of students is 250. Enrollment is often determined by a lottery of eligible applicants. Advocates say this practice makes the student body representative of the community at large. Some urban charter schools are intentionally placed near public transportation to facilitate student travel. Some charter schools focus on specific populations, such as children needing special education.

ATTAINING MASTERY

“Excellence. No excuses” is the motto of Mastery Charter High School, where several Swarthmoreans teach and Deborah Stern '84, director of education, was instrumental in creating the prevailing philosophy and curriculum.

“The stakes are really high now,” Stern says. “There are no jobs for kids who can’t do basic math or read and write.” Dropout rates, she notes, are alarming: 40 to 60 percent nationwide and 30 to 50 percent in Philadelphia.

Automatic promotion to the next grade (social promotion) doesn’t exist at Mastery, located in the Old City section of Philadelphia and formerly called High Tech High. In classes of 12 to 25, 400 students take 12 one-semester courses in each academic subject. Attaining the next level requires a grade of 76 percent or more, demonstrating mastery of the material—thus the school’s name. Graduation, based on individual progress, takes 3 1/2 to 5 years or more.

Flexibility in the classroom is a topic of long interest to Stern, author of *Teaching English So It Matters: Creating Curriculum for and With High School Students* (Corwin Press, 1994), a constructivist text with thematic adaptable instructional units. “What’s different about our approach,” Stern says, “is that skill instruction is a core part of every course.” Students are taught learning skills—how to take notes, read a test, study—that, if weak, could trip them up in college. Upper grades learn goal setting, time management, and how to request an extension and recognize knowledge in various forms. “We teach students how to study in different ways,” Stern says, “such as with practice tests and in study groups.” Test scores at Mastery have increased by nearly two grade levels per year.

This year, 85 percent of eligible students at Mastery took the Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT), Stern says, compared with 27 percent citywide and 62 percent statewide. Another indication of success is parent satisfaction, always 90 percent or higher, she reports.

CARING CULTURE

“It’s clear that Mastery is among the cream of the crop,” says Amy Rhodes '00, who student-taught English and history there last spring while working toward teaching certification and an M.S.Ed. at Penn. Rhodes observed charter schools city-wide for a number of years while working for Research for Action and coordinating community outreach efforts for *Philadelphia Public School Notebook*, an

independent watchdog newspaper. Rhodes admires Mastery’s curriculum, which, she says, “builds on what the students bring to the classroom and leads them to knowledge rather than shoving it into their minds.”

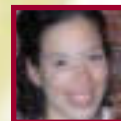
Two years ago, as one of three teachers of color in a district high school faculty of 300, Chela Delgado '03 “heard thinly veiled racist comments in the teacher’s lounge.” Last year, she switched to Mastery. “I was attracted by the mission statement,”

she says, “but what has kept me here is the other teachers. I didn’t understand fully what a difference it would make to interact with them all the time.”

Delgado looks forward to Wednesdays, when school lets out at noon for faculty meetings. Those sessions are also appreciated by



DEBORAH STERN '84
DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION
MASTERY CHARTER H.S.



AMY RHODES '00
GRADUATE STUDENT
U. OF PENNSYLVANIA



CHELA DELGADO '03
HUMANITIES TEACHER
MASTERY CHARTER H.S.



KATRINA MORRISON '04
HUMANITIES TEACHER
MASTERY CHARTER H.S.



EMILY CHAVEZ '03
WORLD HISTORY TEACHER
NUEVA ESPERANZA ACADEMY



KATRINA CLARK '03
5TH-GRADE TEACHER
FREEDOM ACADEMY

Katrina Morrison '04, completing her first full year of teaching grammar and social studies at Mastery after a year of substituting there. Morrison, who describes her childhood home as “a small, poor black community” in Darby Township, northeast of Swarthmore, wants to help those in similar circumstances who receive

little advocacy elsewhere. Extending Mastery's successes beyond its walls remains a goal. This fall, a second campus will open at the former Thomas Middle School in South Philadelphia. During the next 3 years, Mastery will create three new charter high schools with a \$2.65 million grant from NewSchools Venture Fund, a California-based venture philanthropy firm.

Of the first freshman class of 100, 65 seniors remain. ("We know where the other 35 are," Stern says.) "Every day, there's a new college acceptance to celebrate," she said in early April. "We're flying."



ANDY DANILCHICK '95
7TH-GRADE LEAD TEACHER
MARIANA BRACETTI ACADEMY

TOUGH ASSIGNMENTS

Emily Chavez '03 teaches world history, in English, at the bilingual Nueva Esperanza Academy Charter High School, where predominantly Latino students in grades 9 to 12 range in age from 12 to 20. The school has a large English as a Second Language program. Meredith Hegg '00 teaches math there.

At Nueva Esperanza, with a staff of 60 and about 600 students, students who earn less than 72 percent on a test or have missed one day of school or two assignments in one week—more than two thirds of them, Chavez says—are expected to attend after-school tutoring by their own teachers.

"I wanted to have high expectations for all my students," says Chavez, whose class size is 18 to 21, "but it's difficult. Most are not from educational environments emphasizing independent thinking." Yet last year, 80 percent of the school's first graduating class was accepted to college, Chavez says, a better rate than that of other area public schools.

"One of the biggest differences between the charter school and the district school where I taught last year," Chavez says, "is working with other teachers who really like what they do and don't feel stuck."

Chavez's father is Peruvian; her mother is white. "Kids feel some connection with me as a person of color," she says. Chavez, who grew up in a predominantly white Cincinnati neighborhood, works with low-income students because few local role models of color filled her youth. "I have some hope of starting a school in the future," she says.

Across the Delaware River in Camden, N.J., Chavez's housemate Katrina Clark '03 taught fifth grade last school year at Freedom Academy Charter School. Freedom Academy is one of 38 schools run by KIPP, the Knowledge Is Power Program, with 300 teachers and more than 6,000 students in 15 states and the District of Columbia. The four teachers and three administrators at brand-new Freedom Academy bonded in "creating something from nothing," Clark says, devising not only a curriculum but also transportation, disciplinary rules, and food service. Last fall, by default, Clark was the school's last-minute, self-assigned, first crossing guard. Freedom Academy had started before the nearby district school, whose crossing guard hadn't arrived yet.

DESIGNING CHANGE

"Charter schools are places where merit, talent, and energy are rewarded, not years of service," says Andy Danilchick '95. Two years out of Swarthmore, he earned a master's degree from the University of Pennsylvania's Leadership in Professional Education Program. Five years ago, he was design coach for Nueva Esperanza, which he helped found. For 4 years, he has taught English language arts and now serves as 7th-grade "village lead" (lead teacher) at Mariana Bracetti Academy Charter School (grades 6–12) in Philadelphia's Kensington neighborhood.

Danilchick, first in his family to attend college, is quoted extensively in a chapter on progressive school educators in *The Emancipatory Promise of Charter Schools: Toward a Progressive Politics of School Choice*, edited by Eric Rofes and Lisa Stulberg (State University of New York Press, 2004). "I'm cynical about prospects for broad-level change in this country," Danilchick says. "School districts are highly entrenched, supporting the status quo with school boards, unions, and parents. Schools are all about control and bureaucracy, not developing critical thinking."

Danilchick praises the support and professional development provided by New York City-based Edison Schools Inc., which runs Mariana Bracetti as well as 156 other schools (not only charters) in 19 states and the District of Columbia, including 20 of the lowest-achieving schools in Philadelphia.

In what seems like a contradiction, Danilchick and wife Andrea Gifford '93 are home schooling their 6-year-old son, Jake—or "unschooling" him, as Danilchick says. He says he continues to teach at Mariana Bracetti because "I can make a difference in that neighborhood," but he thinks that public education is "basically broken. It's too focused on things other than the kids." Home schooling has become a model for the kinds of learning environment he thinks could be most successful—"small classrooms in small schools."

WEB RESOURCES

Readers interested in learning more about charter schools will find additional resources along with the on-line version of this article at www.swarthmore.edu/bulletin. Included are the following:

- Selected bibliography on charter schools
- List of related Web sites
- Glossary of terms that demystifies “charter,” “magnet,” “voucher,” and others
- Conflicts and challenges: taxpayers, unions, and school boards

ANXIOUS FOR THE FUTURE

Emilia Pastor moved to New York a year ago and took a job at Crossroads Middle School, a small, traditional public school on West 109th St. She’s been teaching in urban schools—some traditional, some charter—since graduating, and 2004–2005 wasn’t her best year in the classroom. At year’s end, 10 of the 20 teachers (including Pastor) at Crossroads decided to leave the school. The experience left her “very anxious about the future of our urban students.”

Pastor’s teaching experiences have varied a lot, depending largely on how well the school and the system were administered. She found the New York bureaucracy “frustrating,” the school building “ancient, with mouse droppings and dust almost everywhere,” and morale so low that it was “hard to get excited about teaching.”

“I student-taught at Radnor High School in suburban Philadelphia, and,” she says, “it’s hard to believe that Radnor and Crossroads are both public schools because there is really no comparison between them.”

Her charter school experiences have also varied. At Maria Bracetti Academy in Philadelphia, she saw high teacher turnover and an “unstable administration.” Yet the opposite was true when she taught at Mastery Charter, where there was “a very qualified staff and a very stable administration.”

“Charter schools vary so drastically,” she says, “that I find it impossible to assess it as a movement.”

SENSE OF URGENCY

Running a charter school is like running a nonprofit organization, says Dana Lehman ’98, co-director of Roxbury Preparatory Charter School. Juggling grants, payroll, and buildings and grounds problems, most charter school principals are “muddled down in financial issues,” Lehman says. At Roxbury Prep, she’s able to focus on curriculum and instruction, leaving operations and finance to Josh Phillips, co-director. In 2004, Roxbury Prep was the highest-performing urban middle school in Massachusetts.

Although charter schools “are not ultimately the answer for every child,” Lehman says, “they create a sense of urgency within the system.” One aim of charter school leaders, Lehman says, “is to eliminate excuses given by other schools and show that it can be done.” (For more on Roxbury Prep, see “Academic Rigor,” *March Bulletin*.)

PULL OF ROOTS

Taking Introduction to Education at Swarthmore with Visiting Professor Kevin Kumashiro, now a senior professional associate in the Human and Civil Rights Division of the National Education Association, showed Elizabeth Hang Le ’03 as a sophomore that “education was a concrete, structured, effective way to create social change,” she recalls. “My closest friends today were in that class together,” Le says. All are teaching now.

Le teaches at Neighborhood House Charter School (pre-K-8) in Dorchester, Mass., which has posted high state test scores and will expand next year. She previously taught at Mariana Bracetti. “It’s important for me to work with low-income or inner-city youth because that’s the community I came from,” says Le, who grew up in Roslindale and East Boston and attended Swarthmore on a full scholarship. “My job and my life’s work are one and the same. Not everybody can say that.”

REACHING DIVERSE LEARNERS

During her 3 years in the Philadelphia system, Lindsay Goldsmith ’01 taught at a regular public elementary school and “two really great charter elementary schools”—Greenwood Charter School and Wissahickon Charter School. She earned her teaching certification while taking night classes during her first year on the job.

In one third-grade classroom, Goldsmith says, “Nine of my 26 third-grade students



EMILIA PASTOR '01
TEACHER, CROSSROADS
MIDDLE SCHOOL (MS246)



LINDSAY GOLDSMITH '01
MATH AND SOCIAL STUDIES
NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSE
CHARTER SCHOOL



ELIZABETH HANG LE '03
MATH AND SOCIAL STUDIES
NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSE
CHARTER SCHOOL



DANA LEHMAN '98
CO-DIRECTOR
ROXBURY PREPARATORY

had learning or emotional problems, or both. Because they were of such varying skill levels, I needed to create at least four separate lesson plans for most subjects.

"That's one reason I wanted an advanced degree," she continues, "to learn how to design the curriculum so more kids can learn more of the time." In June, she received a master's in education from Harvard, where she studied the neuroscience of learning and "how to engage with all types of learners, including those with special needs, faster and better than before."

Goldsmith is currently teaching sixth-grade math and social studies at Neighborhood Charter School in Boston, which, at 12, is one of the oldest charter schools in the nation. But she and her friend Jenny Hoedeman '01, still teaching at Wissahickon, have "big plans," she says. "We're going to open our own school one day." ❧

Marcia Ringel, a writer and editor in Ridgewood, N.J., is a regular contributor to the Bulletin. Her most recent article, on obsessive-compulsive disorder in children, appeared in March 2002.

CYBERCHARTERS: ATTENDING SCHOOL ON-LINE

During the 2004–2005 school year, more than 60 non-classroom-based cybercharter schools, in which a significant portion of instruction is performed on computers used at home, served more than 16,000 U.S. students in 15 states, according to Columbia University's National Center for the Study of Privatization in Education. Teachers and administrators may be located elsewhere in the student's state or in another state thousands of miles away. Among the fastest-growing types of charter schools, especially in California, are taxpayer-funded networks of home schoolers. As of December 2004, 11 cybercharter schools in Pennsylvania were serving grades K–8, K–12, 6–12, and 9–12.

The Web site of Pennsylvania Leadership Charter School, with offices in Frazer, Pa., allays concerns about student isolation as follows: "PA Leadership eliminates harmful socialization. We eliminate drugs, alcohol, gangs, fights, unhealthy teasing, and the fear associated with an unsafe environment. . . . Why might my child do better in a cyber school than in a regular brick and mortar school? Because we eliminate the time zappers—busing, changing of classes, lunch, homeroom, and discipline issues."

Eligibility controversies are illustrated in a situation that was still roiling this summer. From 2001 to 2004, three to five of the six children of U.S. Sen. Rick Santorum (R-Pa.) were enrolled in Pennsylvania Cyber Charter School (previously called Western Pennsylvania Cyber Charter School). The Pittsburgh-area school district where Santorum owns a house then demanded a refund of funds it had paid the school for the children's fees, charging that they actually lived in Virginia. Last fall, the Santorums withdrew the children, who are being home-schooled as before. In July, a hearing officer recommended rejecting the district's demand because it had filed too late. A final ruling by the state education secretary was expected no sooner than mid-August.

The boreal forest of interior Alaska with its mosaic-patterned expanses of spruce trees, bogs, wetlands, and rivers is not a region usually associated with lightning strikes and wildfires. Yet, according to F. Stuart “Terry” Chapin ’66, the elders of the Athabascan tribes that inhabit the region have observed an increase in the frequency of thunderstorms during the last half-century. Some blame the abandonment of traditions such as biting a dog’s ear while commanding the Nature spirits that cause storms to “stop messing with us.” Others, perhaps more scientifically, perceive the increased storm frequency as a result of global warming.

A pioneer in the study of terrestrial ecosystems, Chapin investigates the resilience of regional systems that are experiencing changes in climate, economics, and culture. A longtime participant in worldwide comparative studies, he works with experts on land-atmosphere carbon exchange and carbon inputs to lakes and streams, conducting field research in Alaska and Eastern Siberia to document the impact of the disturbances, particularly fire and thaw lakes, on carbon and nutrient cycling.

Siberian ecosystems, he says, differ from those in Alaska in that their soils, which originated in the Pleistocene age, are deeper and contain large quantities of ice and organic matter. When these soils thaw because of climate warming or fire, the organic matter decomposes quickly and releases carbon to the atmosphere, resulting in soil subsidence and the formation of “thaw lakes,” which then deliver carbon and nutrients into the aquatic ecosystems.

Both the Siberian and Alaskan research results provide a basis for projecting feedbacks from ecological change to the climate system in the North. Working with ecologists from around the world to compare and synthesize the impacts of global climate change on ecological processes and their effect on human life at high latitudes, Chapin analyzes the factors that affect both the regions’ resilience and their vulnerability to such change.

The results are not always as expected. Last year, for example, Chapin and his colleagues reported that, contrary to a widely held supposition, increased plant growth on the increasingly warm and moist Arctic tundra does not reduce atmospheric carbon levels. Scientists had hoped that the increase in plant life from warming would sequester carbon and act as a brake on further warming. “We all had a lot of unproven assumptions about how nutrient release might affect ecosystems,” he says.

Preserving the world’s ecological processes is one of the most pressing challenges facing humanity, Chapin says. “How do we sustain the most desirable features of Earth’s ecosystems and society at a time of rapid changes in all of the major forces that govern their properties?” Because many of the changes are driven by social-ecological interactions, much of his research is performed in collaboration with social scientists. “In thinking about ways that I, as an ecologist, can make the world a better place, I need to understand the connections between ecological systems and human well-being.”

One set of interactions of great concern to Chapin is the impact of the changing role of fire—particularly as affected by human activity—on the boreal forests, their Athabascan population, animals, forest products, and the ecological processes of the region. Because climate change from global warming is more pronounced at higher latitudes, he says, wildfires have become the dominant disturbance there.

With a team including anthropologists and political scientists, Chapin makes field trips into Athabascan communities to talk with local people about the effects of changing fire regime—the frequency, intensity, severity, and size of wildfires—and fire management on their ecosystems and the resources they provide. He discusses the economic impact of paying firefighters in rural communities; the effect of lightning and prescribed ignition and suppression of fires on fire regime; and the influence of national fire policy and local public opinion

on the formulation and implementation of local fire policy.

Stressing the importance of trying to understand the worldview of the rural population, Chapin says: “Unlike the Western perspective that people are separate from Nature, these people have a much more personal relationship to the environment.” For them, manipulating changes in fire regime—an integral aspect of a system of which they are part—by prescribed ignition and suppression of fires, is tantamount to meddling with the natural functioning of their social-ecological system. To install managers to control these changes would alter the role of people in the set of natural interactions between humans and Nature.

Chapin consults local fire records from the past 50 years and gathers observations and recollections from the tribal elders from before that time. Examining phenomena such as lake thaw and the age distribution of vegetation stands on the landscape, he is able to ascertain the degree of change in fire frequency over the last century or two. He then provides scientific data to corroborate the elders’ accounts and discusses with them how changes in climate and fire regime impact them and their dependence for subsistence on resources such as moose, caribou, lynx, blueberries, snowshoe hares, and timber. He discusses the possibilities of positively influencing the communities’ ecosystems and their climate through fire management to enhance subsistence resources. For example, the most nutritious food for moose grows best in burned areas because of the abundance of nutrients released after a fire—a fact important to hunters seeking animals’ grazing grounds.

“I’ve tried to come up with a kind of predictive framework for understanding how different kinds of plants occur where they do and how they influence patterns of nutrient cycling, how they impact the way in which the land surface influences regional climate.” Chapin says. “A general example would be that there’s a trade-off between the energy that plants invest in growth and the energy they invest in defending themselves

THE BURNING

GLOBAL WARMING IS
INCREASING WILDFIRES
IN ALASKA AND
CHANGING THE LIVES OF
NATIVE PEOPLES THERE.

By Carol Brévarit-Demm

"If we can more clearly document the consequences of overwarming at high latitudes, then we can make a more convincing case of the profound effect of our behavior on human lives."



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CHAPIN PHOTO COURTESY MIMI CHAPIN

against herbivores." He explains that, according to the patterns of nutrient cycling in various environments, plants may invest more energy in growth and less in defense, which leads to rapid growth and an increase in the herbivore population; or, under different conditions, with slow rates of nutrient cycling, other plants may grow more slowly and expend more energy on defense against herbivores.

"As humans change the environment by burning fossil fuels and adding nitrogen to the system," Chapin says, "the natural balance and the dynamics of these two types of ecosystems is changed in ways much more profound than the damage wrought by the immediate impact of acid rain on plants or lakes."

"The kinds of issues we're talking to the Athabascans about," Chapin says, "are just a microcosm of the issues the whole world is facing. There has to be a much clearer connection made between our lifestyles and their impact on people of the North and their well-being because these are the issues we'll all be facing in the coming decades. If we can more clearly document the consequences of overwarming at high latitudes, then we can make a more convincing case of the profound effect of our behavior on human lives. We can't wait until these impacts become globally obvious because,

Smoke blankets the Black Spruce forests just north of Fairbanks, Alaska. Summer 2004 was both the hottest and driest in Alaskan history, leading to record areas of forest being burned. A professor of ecology at the Arctic Institute at the University of Alaska at Fairbanks, Chapin (*left*) was the first Alaskan to be elected, in 2004, to the National Academy of Sciences. Mimi Chapin (*right*) acts as his translator.

by then, it will be too late."

When Chapin's research takes him to Siberia, he is accompanied by his wife, Melissa "Mimi" Carroll Chapin '66. A Russian major at the College, also fluent in Spanish, French, Italian, and German, she now acts as interpreter. They met in a line during freshman orientation at Swarthmore, and, Mimi says, they are still enjoying a "continually evolving and multifaceted collaboration." He played viola in the College orchestra, and she sang in the chorus. They were both members of the Outing Club. Through 2 years in the Peace Corps, Chapin's graduate school days, and beyond, they have shared experiences—Mimi has assisted her husband in the field or in the lab. Then, she says, "as Terry became more involved in research, I put all the writing skills I'd learned at Swarthmore into editing his writing." Later, as a translator of Russian scientific texts—many on Northern topics—it was Mimi who initiated, coordinated, and interpreted for the exchanges between her husband's research groups and Russian ecologists. She also maintains his Web site (www.faculty.uaf.edu/fffsc) and provides computer-generated scientific illustrations for his books.

Residents of Fairbanks for the past 28 years, the Chapins both perform with the Fairbanks Symphony and play Irish music with friends. They also love sculpting ice and have competed in the World Ice Art Championships—"not the tabletop kind; ours are 30-foot-high blocks that weigh thousands of pounds"—for which Mimi serves as publicity coordinator and interpreter for visitors from all over the world.

Passionate about helping others sustain life at high latitudes, they evidently enjoy living it, too. "Many of the things we ended up doing—the peace activities, the conservation and sustainability issues, concern with human well-being—are threads that came out of Swarthmore," they say. ☞

ING NORTH



ECHOES OF WAR

THE VIETNAM WAR REVERBERATES
IN POEMS AND PHOTOGRAPHS.

Poems by W.D. Ehrhart '73

Images by Don Fox

Although the Vietnam War officially ended more than 30 years ago, its images, lessons, and reverberations continue to echo in the art created by those who experienced it firsthand. Two Vietnam veterans—poet, writer, and editor W.D. Ehrhart '73 and photographer Don Fox—have brought their respective visions together in *A Sort of Peace: Echoes and Images of the Vietnam War*, from which this selection is drawn.

Although they met for the first time in 2005, Fox, former chief announcer with the Armed Forces Vietnam Network and later a successful broadcast journalist, and Ehrhart, who enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps in 1966 at age 17, had overlapping tours of duty in Vietnam during 1967.

Ehrhart's first published poetry appeared in a 1972 anthology sponsored by Vietnam Veterans Against the War, when he was a student at Swarthmore. Since then, he has authored 14 books of prose and poetry, including *Beautiful Wreckage: New and Selected Poems*, where these poems also appear. Currently, he teaches English and history at the Haverford School in suburban Philadelphia.

Upon his return to civilian life, Fox worked as a broadcaster and later as a teacher in upstate New York. He retired in 2002 and now regularly exhibits his contemporary photographs in galleries there. He also assembled the one-man traveling exhibit, *Face to Face: Images From a Different War*, featuring 40 digitally re-mastered Vietnam-era photographs.

Ehrhart and Fox began their collaboration when Fox, seeking a venue for his Vietnam photographs in Philadelphia, called Ehrhart. Their combined images and poems were later posted on the World Wide Web at www.todayinliterature.com and published in a limited edition by Fox. Copies may be ordered by contacting Ehrhart at wdehrhart@worldnet.att.net.



THE OLD SOLDIERS

The old soldiers imagine themselves warriors.
They remember the benediction of duty,
the future of women and pride.
They remember the beautiful weapons,
and always the beautiful dead.

They are wearing their colored ribbons.
They are watching the years march by.
They are full of a glorious sadness,
believing themselves important
and cheated of what they have earned.

POEMS © W.D. EHRHART. IMAGES © DON FOX. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.



HOW IT ALL COMES BACK

The bullet entered between the eyes,
a hole like a punctuation mark
from an AK-47 or M-16,
white at the edges but glistening black,
a tunnel straight to the brain.
That's what I saw when I picked her up

before crushed veins reopened, blood
began to cover my shirt, reflex
covered the hole with my hand,
and I started calling for help.

It was only a child's fall on a rock;
it only took three stitches to close,
but I couldn't look at my daughter
for months without seeing that hole:
I'd seen holes like that before,
but never on someone alive.

GUNS

Again we pass that field
green artillery piece squatting
by the Legion Post on Cheltenham Avenue,
its ugly little pointed snout
ranged against my daughter's school.

"Did you ever use a gun
like that?" my daughter asks,
and I say, "No, but others did.
I used a smaller gun. A rifle."
She knows I've been to war.

"That's dumb," she says,
and I say, "Yes," and nod
because it was, and nod again
because she doesn't know.
How do you tell a four-year-old

what steel can do to flesh?
How vivid do you dare to get?
How explain a world where men
kill other men deliberately
and call it love of country?

Just eighteen, I killed
a ten-year-old. I didn't know.
He spins across the marketplace
all shattered chest, all eyes and arms.
Do I tell her that? Not yet,



though one day I will have
no choice except to tell her
or to send her into the world
wide-eyed and ignorant.
The boy spins across the years

till he lands in a heap
in another war in another place
where yet another generation
is rudely about to discover
what their fathers never told them.

THE INVASION OF GRENADA

I didn't want a monument,
not even one as sober as that
vast black wall of broken lives.
I didn't want a postage stamp.
I didn't want a road beside the Delaware
River with a sign proclaiming:
"Vietnam Veterans Memorial Highway."

What I wanted was a simple recognition
of the limits of our power as a nation
to inflict our will on others.

What I wanted was an understanding
that the world is neither black-and-white
nor ours.

What I wanted
was an end to monuments.

The weekend of June 3 to 5 started off damp, but the drizzle stopped on Saturday morning—just in time for the parade! Ed Mahler '50 served as parade marshal as hundreds of members of the Classes of 1935 to 2003 marched in front of Parrish Hall into the Lang Performing Arts Center for the annual Alumni Collection. By Saturday afternoon, the sun burst through, and the class dinners were enjoyed without interference from Mother Nature, much to the relief of 1985, 2000, and 2003 classmates, who were dining al fresco.

Some of the weekend's highlights included faculty lectures by Farha Ghannam, assistant professor of anthropology; Peter Schmidt, professor of English literature; and Elizabeth Vallen, associate professor of biology. The 60th anniversary of the Swarthmore Folk Festival was celebrated, many alumni toured the new buildings on campus, and Associate Professor of Music John Alston led a performance of the Mozart *Requiem* dedicated to the memory of the late Gilmore Stott.

The Collection speaker was Hugh Nissenson '55, whose topic was "My Debt to Swarthmore." The Arabella Carter Award for community services was presented to Adalyn "Lyn" Purdy Jones '40, and the Joseph Shane Award for service to the College was presented to Kenneth and Anne Matthews Rawson '50.

Alumni Weekend would not happen without the hard work of the reunion chairs and their committees for each class—many thanks to them all.

The Alumni Relations Office is already planning for next year, when Swarthmore will welcome members of classes ending in 1 and 6 and the Class of 2004. The dates are June 2 to 4, 2006. Plan to be with us on campus.

Photographs by Meghan Kriegel Moore '97 and Eleftherios Kostans



Spring showers brought beautiful flowers—a rainy, cool spring on campus yielded spectacular results throughout the Scott Arboretum for alumni to enjoy Alumni Weekend.



Artists in temporary residence during the weekend were (left to right) List Gallery Director Andrea Packard '85, Esther Glaser Parada '60, Elissa Swanger '95, and Jane Walker Kennedy '55.

Mara Baird '79, Emily Sack '80, and Darryl Hatheway, husband of the late Megan Bevan '80 (left to right), attended the dedication of the new alumni terrace in memory of Megan. The terrace connects the Clothier Memorial Hall cloisters with the remodeled Sproul Alumni House.



(Above) Lyn Purdy Jones '40 received the Arabella Carter Award for Community Service from Alumni Council member Jim Fligg '50.

(Right) Kasia Koziol-Dube '03, Felicia Carter '03, and Zoila Forgiore '03 (left to right)



Members of the Class of 1940 celebrated their 65th reunion this year and had a great time marching in the parade. Many members of the class returned for reunion and enjoyed a lovely luncheon after the parade and Collection.

(Left) The Class of 1970 gathered on Magill Walk before the alumni parade.



Members of the Class of 1985 partied in Lang Performing Arts Center lobby.

A PLAY, A BOOK, A NICE FRENCH MEAL

Austin/San Antonio: This Connection book club is going strong. In July, the group discussed *The No. 1 Ladies Detective Agency* by Alexander McCall Smith. If you are interested in joining this group, contact America Rodriguez '78 at (512) 329-5506, or e-mail arodriguez@mail.utexas.edu.

Boston: The Boston Connection, under the direction of David Wright '69 and Ted Chan '02, was very busy this spring. Members attended *Tooth and Claw*, a new play featuring Lisa Morse '92, which addressed environmental issues; and "The Song of the Bells," a talk by acclaimed author Christopher Castellani '94 about the evolution of his writing process. There was also a happy hour at the end of May. David and Ted are planning events for the fall and winter. Watch your mail for upcoming events.

DC/Baltimore: Peter Zimmerman '69 arranged for the first Baltimore Supper Club. He wrote: "We had an excellent turnout, about 28 people, for a dinner at Martick's French Restaurant in May, with recent and not-so-recent graduates. We had most of the restaurant to ourselves, and it made for good socializing." The Supper Club is meant to be an informal group of "foodies" who like to meet and socialize with Swarthmore alumni at Baltimore-area restaurants. Another dinner is being planned for September.



HAZEL FLOWERS-MCCABE

Chicago Connection Chair Marilee Roberg '73 arranged for alumni, parents, and friends to attend a performance of *Pigs Have Wings* at the City Lit Theatre Company.

LANG CENTER SEEKS INTERNSHIP SPONSORS

The Lang Center for Civic and Social Responsibility is seeking summer internship opportunities for Swarthmore students during summer 2006. The center has funds to pay students for up to 10 weeks, but help with housing is appreciated. If you are interested in having a student committed to social action assist your organization, contact Cecily Roberts Selling '77, alumni liaison with the center, at (610) 328-7330 or cselling@stratfordfriends.org. The Lang Center, which opened its offices in the Swarthmore train station in Sept. 2004, provides support and coordination for many of the College's community partnerships and student service organizations.



PATRICK ZWEIDLER-MCKAY '89

Sabrina Martinez '92 (right) arranged for a tour of NASA's Johnson Space Center in June.



COURTESY OF BRUCE GOULD '54

SAGES EXPERIENCE SPOLETO

Eleven Garnet Sages—alumni who have reached their 50th reunion—led by Supreme Sage Bruce Gould '54, enjoyed 3 days of music, theater, and dance, at the Spoleto Festival in Charleston, S.C., in June. The next scheduled trip is during the fall, when the Sages will tour the Peabody Essex Museum and other places of interest in Salem, Mass. Sages who are interested in traveling with the group may contact Astrid Devaney at (610) 328-8412.

Among those enjoying the Garnet Sage trip to the Spoleto Festival were (left to right) Claire Barton Olsen '43, Wilberta Moody Hardy '43, Cornelia Fuller '54, Cynthia Babbott, Edward Babbott '44, Lilo Teutsch Strauss '47, Bruce Gould, Lucy Bunzl Mallan '54, and Astrid Devaney of the Alumni Relations Office.

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION OFFICERS

President

Seth Brenzel '94

Vice President

Kevin Quigley '74

Vice President

Laura Belfer '75

Vice President

Minna Newman Nathanson '57

Secretary

David D. Wright '69

ZONE A

Delaware, Pennsylvania

Jorge Aguilar '05

Philadelphia, Pa.

Daniel Honig '72¹

Swarthmore, Pa.

Karen Kelly '73¹

Elkins Park, Pa.

Colette Mull '84²

Glen Mills, Pa.

Cecily Roberts Selling '77³

Philadelphia, Pa.

Jon Van Til '61³

Swarthmore, Pa.

Jonathan Willis '63²

Dover, Del.

Kai Tai Xu '03²

Philadelphia, Pa.

ZONE B

New Jersey, New York

Susan Yelsey Aldrich '71¹

Pelham, N.Y.

Lauren Belfer '75³

New York, N.Y.

Onuoha Odum '85²

Brooklyn, N.Y.

Steven Rood-Ojalvo '73¹

Haddonfield, N.J.

Yongsoo Park '94³

New York, N.Y.

Martha Spaninger '76²

New York, N.Y.

Renee Willemsen-Goode '03²

New York, N.Y.

ZONE C

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

Mary Morse Fuqua '59¹

Williamstown, Mass.

Meghan Kriegel Moore '97²

Lowell, Mass.

Scott Rankin '94²

Cambridge, Mass.

Thomas Riddell '66¹

Northampton, Mass.

Stephen P. Smith '83³

Winchester, Mass.

Susan Raymond Vogel '56³

Worcester, Mass.

ZONE D

District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia

Mary Catherine Kennedy '80³

Washington, D.C.

Albert Kim '93¹

Washington, D.C.

Rosanne Boldman McTyre '74¹

Washington, D.C.

Kevin Quigley '74³

Arlington, Va.

Barbara Wolff Searle '52²

Washington, D.C.

ZONE E

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

Samuel Awuah '94³

Chicago, Ill.

Elizabeth Moss Evanson '56³

Madison, Wis.

Maurice Kerins '76¹

Dallas, Texas

Stephen Lloyd '57²

Park Forest, Ill.

Sabrina Martinez '92¹

Houston, Texas

Susan Schultz Tapscott '72²

Houston, Texas

Matt Williams '04

Westerville, Ohio

ZONE F

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

Mary Ellen Grafflin Chijioke '67³

Greensboro, N.C.

James Fligg '50²

North Palm Beach, Fla.



ELEFTHERIOS KOSTANS

Author Hugh Nissensen '55 spoke at the 2005 Alumni Collection.

Amy Lansky Knowlton '87¹

Decatur, Ga.

Ken Moskowitz '76¹

Tokyo, Japan

Lawrence S. Phillips '63³

Atlanta, Ga.

Ann Stuart '65²

Chapel Hill, N.C.

ZONE G

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

Elizabeth Geiger '96²

Upland, Calif.

Steven Gilborn '58³

Valley Village, Calif.

Christine Halstead '91¹

Foster City, Calif.

Harold Kalkstein '78²

San Carlos, Calif.

Barry Schkolnick '80¹

Los Angeles, Calif.

MEMBER AT LARGE

Diane Dietzen '83²

Horsham, Pa.

CONNECTION REPRESENTATIVES

Atlanta

Linda Valleroy '72

Austin/San Antonio

Jennifer Jacoby Wagner '92

Boston

Ted Chan '02

David Wright '69

Chicago

Marilee Roberg '73

Durham

Julia Knerr '81

London

Abby Honeywell '85

Metro DC/Baltimore

Trang Pham '01

Jacqueline Morais Easley '96

Metro NYC

Lisa Ginsburg '97

John Randolph '97

Paris

Catherine Seeley Lowney '82

Philadelphia

James J. Moskowitz '88

Paula Goulden-Naitov '79

Pittsburgh

Barbara Sieck Taylor '75

San Francisco

Holland deWilde Bender '93

Ruth Lieu '94

Andy Wong '02

Seattle

James Schembs '01

Lorin Nelson '00

Deborah SchAAF '95

Tucson

Laura Markowitz '85

¹ Term ends 2008

² Term ends 2006

³ Term ends 2007

⁴ Nominating Committee



BOB KRIST

THE MEANING OF
SWARTHMORE

A Campaign for Swarthmore's Future

A SPIRIT OF HUMILITY

“I like to think that part of what I have taken with me from Swarthmore is a spirit of humility, a belief in the virtue of plainness, which I imagine running beneath the College, beneath all our strivings for bravura performances.”

—*Dan Rothenberg '95*

106 Years Young

GRACE CONNER MONTEITH '20 ENJOYS HELPING PEOPLE AND DISCUSSING POLITICS.



AUDREE PENNER

Grace Conner Monteith (seated) and her daughter, Ann, enjoy an afternoon of reminiscing after her 106th birthday celebration luncheon.

Grace Conner Monteith was feted by family and friends on her 106th birthday on July 19 with a lunch celebration at Stapeley in Germantown, the Quaker-based nursing facility, where she lives, just outside Philadelphia. Throughout the meal and rest of the day, Grace continually received hugs and warm wishes from residents and staff members. Her birthday was even noted by a local television station that sent a videographer to capture the occasion and aired it on the evening news.

Grace is always smiling and looked beautiful in her pearls and soft pink satin blouse. She enjoys chatting with visitors. She rolls herself around in her wheelchair using gloves with a rough texture to grasp the wheels more easily. But she has also found an alternative use for them. “When Donna [the activities director] brings in cats, they love to be rubbed with the glove. Oh, they just love it,” Grace said.

Grace said she doesn’t feel much different today than she did at 100.

“Being my age and in my position allows you a lot of time to think. Having to deal with the day-to-day things of life when you’re younger leaves you little time to think, like if you’re raising children or working every day,” Grace said. “At this point in my life, I am able to absorb the things that I may have pushed aside at a younger age. You have time to think about the little things that happened a long time ago. Now, I live in the past more with those thoughts.”

But she is completely up to date on current events. She is outspoken on people and politics and is quite unhappy and vocal about President George W. Bush.

Grace firmly believes the U.S. troops should withdraw from Iraq.

“I think it’s a terrible thing having all those people going over to Iraq. The world seems more vicious today,” she said.

She wondered if President Bush might acknowledge her birthday milestone with a card but then said, “I’d probably send it back.”

“I keep telling her, ‘Hang on, mother, he just has three more years to go, and then there will be someone new,’” said her daughter Ann Martin, 81. Grace also has a son, James, 69. Her husband, Frank, died in 1978 at the age of 85.

She would like to see Hilary Clinton as president of the United States but said, “I worry about the kind of trouble they’ll [other politicians and media] give her if she runs.”

Several months ago, Grace received an unexpected visit from two investigators from the Civil Service Commission. According to Martin, they came to see if it was actually Grace who was living in the nursing home and not her children.

“They were visiting all people over the age of 100. They thought that maybe her death had not been recorded and that her children were actually living in the nursing home and spending her civil service checks,” Martin said. “But after meeting her, they were convinced.”

Grace enjoys watching CNN and local news but does not like the soap operas, *Oprah*, or *Dr. Phil*. She also believes, “It is always important to cultivate friends younger than yourself. It will keep you young and your mind sharp.”

Grace was one of the first people to practice in the field of occupational therapy after she received a degree in 1921 from the Philadelphia School of Occupational Therapy.

She uses these skills to help other residents, offering, for example, stuffed animals that sing and move to encourage a blind resident to benefit from her senses of touch and hearing by pushing a button on the toy to make it operate.

“She smiled and really enjoyed it,” Grace said of her hallmate. “I can’t get any medical history on these people. They don’t allow me access to that. I can only go by the gossip that I hear. But I try to help any way I can.”

—Audree Penner

Still Preaching Tolerance

AFTER 44 YEARS OF ACTIVISM, THE REV. RALPH LORD ROY '50 IS STILL GOING STRONG.

A white man who grew up in rural Vermont might not seem a likely candidate for keynote speaker at a Martin Luther King Jr. Day event.

But someone who was imprisoned several times as a Freedom Rider during the height of the civil rights movement in the 1960s, who not only met but counseled and worked with King would seem like a perfect selection.

The Rev. Ralph Lord Roy is all those things and more.

Last Jan. 17, Roy, 76, a former minister at the First United Methodist Church in Meriden, Conn., and a longtime civil rights activist, delivered King's message of unity in the keynote address at the 20th annual Martin Luther King Jr./Albert Owens Scholarship breakfast at Meriden's Maloney High School.

Roy was born in St. Albans, Vt., one of the last stops on the Underground Railroad before Canada. It was also site of the most northerly engagement of the Civil War, in which both his great-grandfather and great-uncle served for the Union. In this environment, Roy said it was natural to be conscious of civil rights, even if there weren't many African Americans living in Vermont.

"My mother was of that Old Yankee abolitionist mentality. Any time she would hear that not all Americans were treated fairly, she would sound off. A child takes that sort of thing in, I guess," he says.

Roy became involved in the struggle for civil rights in the late 1940s at Swarthmore, where he joined CORE, the Congress of Racial Equality, and began protesting segregation in the Philadelphia area. After attending Columbia University Law School and Union Theological Seminary in Manhattan, he spent 12 years of ministry at black churches in Harlem and Brooklyn.

"This chapter in my life began in 1957, when a large church in Harlem wanted to try out a white associate pastor," Roy recalled. "I was very well received. It wasn't such a step to take up the African American causes and concerns from there."

His first arrest was in 1961, when he participated in an all-clergy Freedom Ride in response to the violence other Freedom Rides had encountered in the Deep South. Traveling down the East Coast, attempting to integrate bus stations along the way, Roy and nine others were arrested at a Tallahassee, Fla., airport after trying to integrate a restaurant in the terminal and refusing to leave when they weren't allowed in.

Undeterred and motivated by faith and a sense of egalitarianism, Roy continued to join in Freedom Rides and participate in civil disobedience.

During a protest in Washington, D.C., over King's arrest in Albany, Ga., in 1962, Roy and a rabbi friend, Israel S. Dresner, volunteered to attend King's trial in Georgia. They went to prison to meet with King, who was in a cell surrounded by black student activists, who, when Roy arrived, started singing loudly, "Oh Freedom, Oh Freedom."

"I was concerned about how we were going to talk to Dr. King over the singing," Roy says.



COURTESY OF RALPH LORD ROY

Rev. Ralph Roy (right) and Rabbi Richard Israel, Yale University chaplain, check their belongings after their 1962 release from prison in Albany, Ga.

King motioned to Roy and Dresner to put their ears to the bars and pointed toward two white guards in the doorway.

"They're singing so they won't hear our conversation," King said.

Roy and King spoke through the bars with the sounds of spirituals around them. A few days later, King asked Roy to organize a prayer pilgrimage in support of the Albany Movement. On Aug. 28, 1962, Roy and other clergy stood at City Hall and read from the Bible, refusing orders to move. A total of 75 clergy and lay people were arrested and charged with congregating on the sidewalk, disorderly conduct, and refusing to disperse—the largest mass imprisonment of clergy in American history, Roy believes.

A *New York Times* article the next day described how the clergy members filed in by twos and read from the Bible before police stepped in, confiscated the Bibles, and arrested them.

"When one prisoner gave his race as 'white,' according to an observer, the policemen replied, 'Well, you may be part white,'" *The Times* reported. "The observer said a policeman had taken a copy of *A Nation of Sheep* from another prisoner, commenting, 'What we got is a nation of niggers.'"

Roy is no longer getting arrested or organizing Freedom Rides. But he does preach the importance of equality, currently as interim minister at historic South Congregational Church in downtown Hartford.

"There are those people who say things haven't changed. That's not true—Albany now has a black mayor" Roy points out. "I think there is still an interest in civil rights, just not in the same way. We still need to fight injustice wherever it is, not just in the African American community."

—Betsy Tranquilli, Meriden, Conn., Record-Journal (Jan. 6),
adapted with permission

Quiet Revolution

WHILE AN INSURGENCY RAGES, NEPAL'S POOREST WOMEN ARE BUILDING A NEW FUTURE—
ONE TOMATO, ONE WATER TANK, ONE FOREST HERB AT A TIME.

By *Huntington Hobbs '72*

The Cosmic Air flight drops steeply out of the clouds in the tightest of turns, the whole plane shuddering from too much being demanded of it. Out the window, the wheels seem to almost be touching the Himalayas. The door to the cockpit is open, as if saying, "If we fly into a mountain you may as well see it coming."

A few hours earlier, I had gone to the Kathmandu airport for domestic flights. Nepal's domestic airport now resembles a funky bus terminal; small, loud, smelly, full of bustle. On the tarmac is a collection of vintage airplanes, looking used and abused, with names like Yeti Air, Buddha Airlines, and Cosmic Air. With Nepal's topography of the highest mountains in the world and a thousand valleys—and a virulent Maoist insurgency controlling the night and the mountainsides—an aerial bus route becomes a must.

The monsoon has arrived. The clouds hide the valleys, and the rains can close the aerial bus route as effectively as a landslide on a mountain road. Whether a plane flies depends on the weather—and the courage of the pilot. Our pilot is said to tie a global positioning meter to his knee, fly up into the clouds, and when the satellite tells his meter he is over his destination, he drops out of the sky assuming the valley opening is below him. Today, our pilot comes out of the clouds and, with a grinding thump, lands on the Pokhara runway.

I suddenly find myself in the middle of a ramshackle military parade. Soldiers and a dozen military vehicles are strewn about the airport. Pokhara is deep in the insurgency area. Among the passengers on the Cosmic

Air flight are several high government officials, with whom I am traveling, and the soldiers are their awaiting escort. I work for Winrock International, an international nonprofit organization created 20 years ago by the Rockefeller family, with a mission to help the poor and disadvantaged throughout the world. I am in Nepal to visit with the 286 Winrock staff in Nepal. I will be going into the countryside with the government officials to review the Winrock agricultural development projects, see their impact, and try to evaluate why the Winrock projects are being allowed to operate in the countryside by the Maoist guerrillas.

The political crisis in Nepal has been accumulating like Himalayan precipitation, layer upon layer of perpetual snow. In 1996, a Maoist rebellion began in Nepal, initially fueled by frustration of the poor about lack of access to royal land. The rural rag-tag insurgent force has grown by attacking isolated security outposts and government offices and steadily pushing the government's presence out of the rural areas. In 2001, a crown prince massacred the king, queen, and five other members of his family in order to ascend the throne. In 2005, a new king closed the parliament, dismissed the government, and appointed himself the sole ruler of Nepal. Tens of thousands have died in the insurgency.

In 1971, I was one of five Swarthmore students who set out for an overland journey from Europe to the Indian subcontinent. Four of us made it to Kathmandu, the capital of Nepal, from where two of us set out to trek to Pokhara. In those days, there were no roads from Kathmandu to Pokhara,

there was no insurgency, and one walked to Pokhara to reach the Annapurna range, surrounded by beauty and tranquillity. Then, the distance between Kathmandu and Pokhara was measured in 6 trekking days. Today, there are roads but also too many guerrillas. This time, the journey took 26 minutes.

Pokhara is a trekkers' paradise. There are dozens of small hotels, hippie restaurants, camping gear stores, tourist shops, trekking guide agencies, currency exchange shops, even trekking map stores. But there are almost no trekkers. Only guerrillas in the mountains.

During the next couple of days, we go into the countryside. The number of government officials with us and their guards decrease at every stop, as we go further from Pokhara. Most of the time, we go in a convoy of three vehicles, with two or three motorcycles ahead. Every town we drive through has a security post on the highway going in and out and a reserve post in the middle of town to support the side being attacked. Towns important to the security forces have the army in green uniforms with the newest of rifles, flax jackets, and sandbag posts spread out and in the high positions. Towns less important have the police in blue uniforms, World War II rifles, and no flak vests. The officers look competent, the soldiers look like scared kids. We have instructions to be back in Pokhara by 5 p.m. at the latest.

There are other dangers on the highway. Motorcycles are the vehicle of choice for the insurgents and are often a target for requisition. The Tata trucks, designed and made in





BIMALA COLANINNO



ALFRED MOLON

The remote Nepalese town of Pokhara (top) wraps around a lake as the Annapurna range wraps around Pokhara. Hobbs (inset, center), managing director for agriculture for the nonprofit aid organization Winrock International, is received by village women at a bamboo and plastic greenhouse. At left is Govindra Prasad Pandey, the Nepalese secretary general for agriculture.

India, have been terrorizing Asian roads for decades. The truck has not changed in 40 years, and there are so many dating from so many different years that interchangeable parts are crucial. From time to time, we pass a Nepali truck wash—a Tata parked in the middle of the river and its driver wielding a bucket. Tata buses are the same truck but with a passenger cabin. These buses are used by the insurgents for mobilizing group attacks; therefore, bus passengers must pile out at every security checkpoint while the vehicle is inspected for weapons.

Every stop on our tour seems a strange mixture of the everyday normal and the conflict. We are received in one government office that has been attacked by rocket-propelled grenades. In a room with scorch marks and no windows, we are shown a Powerpoint presentation on a 19-inch flat-

panel screen. I am taken to visit a coffee collection center that Winrock has established. It is built on the remains of an army outpost that was attacked, destroyed, and abandoned. The question rises: Why are these Winrock projects enduring in the field?

We hike down to a village of *dalits*, the untouchables, the lowest of the castes. Among the poorest, the Winrock staff members have installed drip-irrigation kits and taught the villagers to grow tomatoes and cucumbers. The villagers have paid for the equipment and doubled their income in a year to \$200 per family. Our staff members have concentrated these new skills on the women, and the women have formed an association to organize and sell their produce. The women's association receives me with flowers, paints a red dot *bidi* in the middle of my forehead, and provides me with a village hat. The desperately poor are providing gifts.

In a tightly packed room, the leader of the association reads us her production statistics. She has been taught to read by the project. There is enough money now to send all the children, including the girls, to school. The few men speak also, but it is the women who take the lead—the vegetables have empowered them. Many of the *dalit* men have gone out to the Middle East to seek manual employment. They borrow money for the ticket and leave the debt for their women to pay.

We slip and slide up the mountainside. My fancy sole hiking shoes are helpless against the mud. The rain begins to barrel down. It rains 5,000 millimeters a year here—about 18 feet of rain. I leave under an

umbrella, arms around the waist of our project leader for this village. He has done a tremendous job, and for every dollar he has been given to fund the project, the village has learned to earn \$2 a year—every year from now on. Back on the roadside, I thank our staff profusely.

I visit a school of 800 children that now has running water. The village has a central water faucet for every dozen houses and a big cement tank for storing drinking water. We visit a women's association in the forest. Winrock has taught these villagers to collect spices in the forest and to protect the forest to defend their source.

At every stop, I am received as the special guest, and another red dot is added to my forehead. The red dots spread with the heat across my forehead, and I begin to resemble an insurgency war victim with a serious head wound. At every stop, the message is the same; incomes have doubled or tripled for the desperately poor, and the women's associations are giving voice to the voiceless. I begin to realize it is the villagers keeping the Maoists away from the projects. They don't want anyone messing with their hope.

People will continue to shoot and die, as happens every night in Nepal. Yet, there is another, different revolution in the making. I realize it is happening one woman's association at a time. I wonder if the insurgents recognize the revolution brewing around them. The lowest castes and the poorest women are building a new future—one tomato, one water tank, one forest herb at a time. Maybe this quieter revolution will bring peace to Nepal. ☪

The Possibility of Happiness

JOHN WRONOSKI '80 SURROUNDS HIMSELF WITH SOME EXTRAORDINARY TREASURES.

During the last 4 years, rare-book dealer John Wronoski has acquired more Jorge Luis Borges manuscripts—including many of his greatest works and the only known manuscript of several of his most important *ficciones*—than are held in any single research institution. “Borges didn’t take much care to preserve his papers or, for that matter, his books,” Wronoski says. “Things were—and remain—quite dispersed. Who knows what’s still out there—although I suppose I’m likely to find out in due course.”

His business, *Lame Duck Books*, in Brookline, Mass., focuses on modern Western literature and intellectual history. Wronoski has published about 80 catalogs of Latin American, Russian, French, German literary works, illustrated books and artworks as well as single-author catalogs devoted to Thomas Mann; Friedrich Nietzsche; Søren Kierkegaard; Franz Kafka; and, most recently, the Borges compilation. He has worked as an agent or consultant for writers looking for permanent quarters for their papers, including the late Saul Bellow, W.G. Sebald, Susan Sontag, John Rawls, and Joseph Brodsky. He also does appraisals for universities and private individuals.

Besides dozens of letters, manuscripts, and archives of works by Emily Dickinson, William Wordsworth, Berthold Brecht, Osip Mandelstam, Karl Popper, Walter Benjamin, Vicente Huidobro, and Juan Rulfo, Wronoski, who works from his home, includes in his stock the first English edition of T.S. Eliot’s *The Wasteland*, inscribed to Paul Valéry; the first edition of Rilke’s *Leben und Lieder*, one of seven known extant copies; the correspondence of Isaac Babel with his mother and sister in exile, the largest known quantity of Babel manuscript in existence; and one of approximately 10 known copies of the London imprint of Voltaire’s *Candide*, identified after extensive research as the correct first edition of 12 published in the same year, to name but a few of his treasures.

He keeps rarer works in his home, some in a safe. “The rest,” he says, “are in remote storage, and I rarely look at them unless I must.”

Wronoski’s career in the book trade began in the early 1980s, when, living in Vermont with some friends, he applied for a job in a bookstore he liked in Montpelier. “I suppose the lengthy essay I submitted regarding my qualifications made them nervous, and I didn’t get the job,” he says. However, from that moment on, motivated, he says, by resentment and annoyance, he started to think of opening his own store.

“I realized I’d been buying and selling books for many years already in the normal metabolic flow of bibliophilia, and I thought ‘What a wonderful way not to have to worry about working for a while.’” So, near the corner of 45th and Locust streets in West Philadelphia, squeezed into a tiny space between the office of a moribund heating company and a vacant store front, Wronoski opened a used-book store and called it *The Lame Duck*, believing at the time that his occupation would provide a kind of interlude while



MEGHAN KRIEDEL MOORE '97

John Wronoski, his girlfriend, Heide Hatry, and *Jorge Luis Borges* (left), a sculpture commissioned by Wronoski and brought back from Latin America by plane

he decided upon the next step in his life.

The store, crammed with books and a chess table, was a popular hang-out in the neighborhood, mostly for acquaintances of Wronoski, graduate students, and, he says, “mental patients who’d recently been disgorge from State residencies when funding for state psychiatric institutions was cut in the early ’80s.”

“Naturally, business wasn’t good,” he says. “Almost no one at the University of Pennsylvania would walk five blocks to visit even a world-class book store, and to say mine was humble would be to dignify it overmuch. But the fact that there was any business at all was astonishing, and I was rather encouraged than despondent.”

In 1989, for personal reasons, Wronoski left Philadelphia for Boston, although he continued to maintain the Philadelphia shop, under a manager, for 4 more years. By then, he says, “I was becoming more interested in rare books than huge quantities of scholarly books, so I figured it made no difference where I was located, as my business would be conducted primarily by mail.”

He began by selling first editions of titles that he’d previously sold as so-called “reading copies.” He then sought to locate very special copies of those first editions—copies inscribed by their authors to other prominent writers, cultural figures, or friends. “Over the years,” he says, “my business mutated into the rather idiosyncratic entity it is now. And, in some cases, I’ve been fortunate enough to handle the manuscripts of some quite important works.”

Despite a life surrounded by books, Wronoski is not sure that he is a booklover. “In some dream interpretations,” he says, “Freud equated the book with the mother. What kind of booklover would sell his mother?” Nor would he describe himself as a collector. “I certainly have some variant of the collecting gene, but one that permits me to satisfy myself with just brief possession of the object of passion—although my ‘collection’ doesn’t always revolve at the pace I’d like it to.”

Possessing large quantities of books though, Wronoski says, is a whole different matter. “I’ve had thousands of books in my library since I was 15. That’s just part of what makes life worthwhile—to my mind, quite a large part.”

As Borges once said, “I don’t know why I believe that a book brings us the possibility of happiness, but I am truly grateful for that modest miracle.”

—Carol Brévarat-Demm

Books

Zack Arnstein and **Larry Arnstein '67**, *The Bad Driver's Handbook: Hundreds of Simple Maneuvers to Frustrate, Annoy, and Endanger Those Around You*, Santa Monica Press, 2005. This handbook offers tongue-in-cheek observations about “Bribes, Threats, and Other Secrets to Getting Your License”; “Turn Signals: Why Give Up the Element of Surprise?”; and “Tailgating: How Close Is Not Close Enough?”

James Engell and **Anthony Dangerfield '78**, *Saving Higher Education in the Age of Money*, University of Virginia Press, 2005. As the cost of attending a 4-year college has doubled since 1985, this book asks: At what real cost are we sending our students to college?

Sandra (Spewock) Feder '73, *One of My Own*, Thornwood, 2005. A mystery, set in a fertility clinic, is the story of four people and the ways they deal with loss, which determines finding redemption.

Joseph Horowitz '70, *Classical Music in America: A History of Its Rise and Fall*, W.W. Norton, 2005. This history of American classical music covers folk, popular, and classical genres from the mid-1800s to the new millennium.



Andrew Gregory '04, self-titled CD, 2005. This debut album features the talents of a young songwriter, who has studied with the Vietnamese Zen master Thích Nhất Hanh, and those of international folk guru Tom Prasada-Rao.

George Hurchalla '88, *Going Underground: American Punk, 1979–1992*, Zuo Press, 2005. Documenting the author's experiences in the Florida and Philadelphia punk scenes, this work also describes his experiences as a disk jockey at WSRN and early days at The Club with bands such as the Dead Milkmen.

Priscilla Coit Murphy '67, *What a Book Can Do: The Publication and Reception of Silent Spring*, University of Massachusetts Press, 2005. Murphy reviews the 1962 publication of Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*, which sparked widespread public debate about pesticide abuse and environmental degradation.

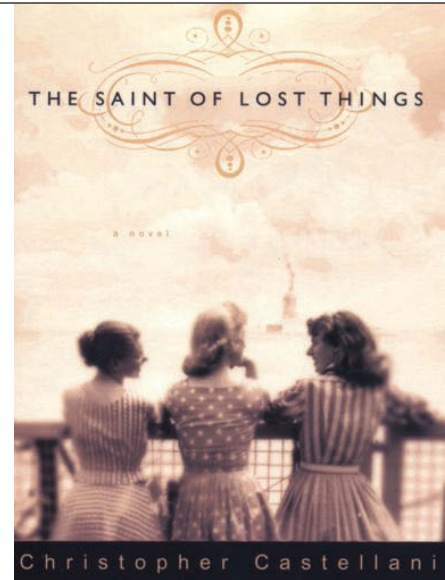
Pamela Miller Ness '72, *Limbo of the Gingko*, Swamp Press, 2005. In the introduction, the author writes, “This sequence of tanka, composed in four parts and written over a period of six years, details two journeys: my father's journey into Alzheimer's disease and my journey as daughter, caregiver, and translator of our experience into words.”

Jon Peterson '57, *The Birth of City Planning in the United States, 1840–1917*, Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003. A narrative history of the origins of city planning in the United States, this work garnered the 2005 Spiro Kostof Award “for scholarship making the greatest contribution to our understanding of urbanism and its relationship to architecture.”

Clyde Prestowitz '63, *Three Billion New Capitalists: The Great Shift of Wealth and Power to the East*, Perseus Books, 2005. An international trade expert describes a rapid shift of American wealth and power to Asia—and why geopolitical clout will follow economic strength.

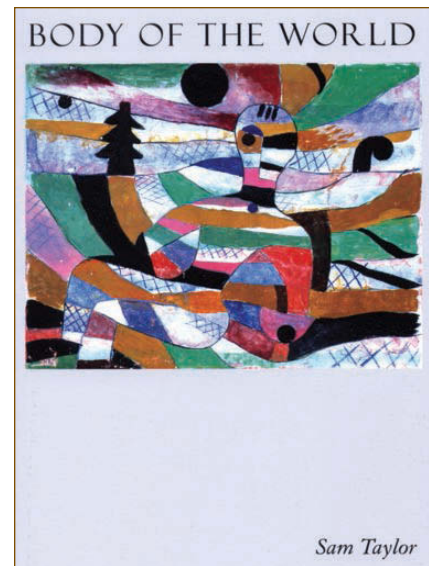
Linda Robinson '82, *Masters of Chaos: The Secret History of the Special Forces*, PublicAffairs, 2004. The story of Special Forces soldiers and their missions around the world, during the past 15 years, concludes in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Victor Romero '87, *Alienated: Immigrant Rights, the Constitution, and Equality in America*, New York University Press, 2005. This book examines the intersection between American immigration and constitutional law, which reserves certain rights for U.S. citizens only—while claiming to treat all people fairly.



Christopher Castellani '94, *The Saint of Lost Things*, Algonquin Books, 2005. Following *A Kiss From Maddalena*, which won the Massachusetts Book Award for Best Work of Fiction, this novel transports us back to 1953 in a close-knit Italian neighborhood.

Maija Bell Samei '86, *Gendered Persona and Poetic Voice: The Abandoned Woman in Early Chinese Song Lyrics*, Lexington Books, 2004. Considering the ambiguity of gender in these poems, the author explores persona and poetic voice.



Sam Taylor '97, *Body of the World*, Ausable Press, 2005. Linking what it means to be human with the physical world, this poet—also a nonfiction writer and English and yoga teacher—draws on his winter experiences in a wilderness refuge.

This One's for the Kids

JILL CHAIFETZ '86 WORKS TO "CHANGE THE CULTURES" THAT CAUSE INEQUITIES IN NYC SCHOOLS.

Jill Chaifetz is one of those big-shot Manhattan lawyers, working from the fifth floor of a 30th Street firm.

In a certain sense that's true.

Chaifetz, who received her law degree from New York University in 1989, says that when leaving Swarthmore, "it was very clear that law school was a way of getting credentials to do work to help make the world a better place." She then laughs at the cliché she heard herself say—the cliché, not the choice.

As executive director of Advocates for Children, Chaifetz works to ensure that all New York City public school students receive their educational entitlements. "I have spent most of my professional life doing public interest work, particularly in regards to children's rights," she says. "I think kids are one of the last groups of people to be recognized as having fully developed rights."

Nearly all of the children served by Advocates for Children are poor, and Chaifetz says most have other additional barriers to access: special educational needs, disabilities, poor English skills, or histories of incarceration or legal troubles. Many have trouble obtaining the services schools owe them by law—and many of their parents are unaware that such laws exist.

Advocates for Children works at all levels, creating the policy reports for decision makers; educating parents and service providers; providing direct service to children; and, in some cases, providing free litigation for students who are being denied educational services. They have even developed a Web site containing information on all but 50 of New York City's 1,300 public schools (www.insideschools.org) that parents can easily access to compare and contrast. Chaifetz leads 46 staff members, 60 percent of whom are bi- or trilingual. Funding is provided mainly by foundations as well as individual donations, fund-raising events, and court-awarded legal fees.

Chaifetz says there are certain trends in the denial of services, including "pushing out" students at risk of not graduating and failing to provide appropriate translation services to immigrant families or required extra services for students with special needs. She says that the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), which was purportedly designed to make schools more accountable for providing access to educational services for every student, has so far shown "some very foreboding signs."

In a 2003 report, Advocates for Children examined the tutoring provision in NCLB, which requires that schools classified as failing for two years must provide free tutoring services to students. "Kids who are English-language learners and kids with disabilities are extremely underrepresented in getting those services, and that was kind of puzzling, since these were some of the most at-risk students at the school," Chaifetz says.



G. PAUL BURNETT/THE NEW YORK TIMES

Advocates for Children's Jill Chaifetz (*left*) and Margaret McHugh, executive director of the New York Immigration Coalition (*second from left*), speak to reporters about setting up a translation network for the non-English-speaking parents of New York City schoolchildren.

Many of the private companies contacted to do the tutoring are unequipped to handle special-needs or immigrant students. The problems causing inequities, Chaifetz says, are "multipronged" and not easily solved. They include unequal political prioritization, direct discrimination, and disparate expectations: "The way teachers or principals perceive the students at a school makes a huge difference in how well those children will do."

She says the purpose of Advocates for Children is not just to help individual children but "to begin to try to change the cultures that lead to discrimination."

Chaifetz—also an adjunct law professor at Fordham University—established the legal department at The Door, a center offering a whole panorama of services to children ages 12 to 20, before coming to Advocates for Children as executive director in 1998. She has never worked at a more traditional law firm.

What the public doesn't see is the family she has dinner with every evening. They are, she says, "essential to who I am and what I do every day." Together with "my most wonderful husband" Daniel Seltzer, Chaifetz is raising triplets—a girl and two boys—who are entering fourth grade this fall. They are, of course, enrolled in a New York City public school.

—Elizabeth Redden '05

Continued from page 3

We should be more concerned with the threats to our own democracy and freedom from the person in the White House.

JOHN MCCRORY '48
Kennett Square, Pa.

DISPATCH DISAPPOINTMENT

“Dispatch from the Middle East” by Saed Atshan '06 (“Collection,” *June Bulletin*) is a disappointment.

Do you realize that “Ramallah, Palestine” does not exist? Did you inquire of Atshan, the author of the article, why his family members had been placed in Israeli prisons? Were they possibly common criminals or felons? Or maybe not. What did they do, causing them to be in an Israeli prison?

Also, the author speaks of current trials in which Abdel-Rahman, now deceased, is the “main plaintiff.” Why was Abdel-Rahman imprisoned at Abu Ghraib, and why he was released? (Of course, torture is totally unacceptable and inexcusable.)

I can certainly agree with Atshan’s closing hope that justice will ultimately prevail. And I would add that the justice should extend to Israelis and all others including those identified as Palestinians. I would further hope for more thorough editing of *Bulletin* articles to minimize bias where possible.

WILLIAM HIRSCH '49
Wayne, Pa.

Saed Atshan replies: “Of course, Ramallah, Palestine, exists. I grew up there, and I am a Palestinian. When they were teenagers, during the first Intifada, my uncles were imprisoned by the Israelis for throwing rocks. Abdel-Rahman, may God rest his soul, was arrested, interrogated, tortured, and released without being charged with any crime.”

MYERS-BRIGGS AND ACADEMIC PSYCHOLOGY

I commend Paul Wachter '97 for his article “Jung Love” (*June Bulletin*) in which he discusses the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI), the personality assessment created by Isabel Briggs Myers '19. It is well researched and written and touches all points of opinion.

“BEFORE STARTING OUR GROSS ANATOMY COURSE, OUR PROFESSOR READ TO US A LETTER THAT ACCOMPANIED ONE OF THE BODIES.”

I write to respond to the generally negative attitude of academic psychology to the MBTI. As the comments quoted in Wachter’s piece show, this negativity often rests on a basic misunderstanding of the Briggs Myers lifework/comprehensive framework/complexity.

For example, Gil and Frank Mustin Professor of Psychology Kenneth Gergen says: “Even Jung recognized that life is a process of development. The MBTI doesn’t recognize this type of development.” In fact, Jung provides a model of lifelong development, which he called individuation. Type development is an important part of that process. The MBTI is widely used in developmental counseling and coaching using this model.

Gergen goes on to declare, “Nor does it consider that someone can be an introvert in one particular setting and an extrovert in another.” Actually, my own preference is introversion, but, when I choose, I can demonstrate such extroverted behavior that many insist I must be an extrovert by preference. One aspect of development is learning to use our less preferred functions more effectively.

Finally, I must object to Professor Dan McAdams’ remark, “The MBTI’s whole notion of traits is arbitrary. It’s just not a credible test.” It must be noted that the MBTI is not a trait-measuring instrument. It asks individuals to indicate their preferences in how they use their minds—and the record of how well it works for people speaks for itself.

Many academics are taking a second and more thorough look at how well the MBTI translates Jung’s ideas into empowering insights.

KATHARINE MYERS
Myers-Briggs Trust
Kennett Square, Pa.

THE SINGLE BRIGHTEST LIGHT

Since I graduated, the College has given me cause to regret some of the turns taken by administrators and by board members. After the loss of Courtney Smith and Sam Carpenter, the single brightest light for me has been Gil Stott and, until her death, Mary Roelofs Stott '40. Now that last light has been turned off. Others will take their place, but not easily. The Stotts lived in a modest home, but no home on or off campus could compare in warmth, in poetry, in fresh baked bread, and in good solid dialogue. My dear wife was not overly impressed with the campus or the endowment or the faculty presentations on Alumni Day. But she fell in love with the Stotts on our first visit and, were she alive today, would join me in sending our affectionate sympathy to the family and friends of Gil and Mary Stott.

HUGH NESBITT '61
Dunn, N.C.

RESPECT FOR THE GIFT

Although a single line in Class Notes might not warrant significant editorial scrutiny, the highlighted text reporting that an alumnus is “cutting up a cadaver named Cosmo” [Class of 2003 Notes, *June Bulletin*] indicates that the editors found humor in this statement. I would like to offer a different perspective.

Before starting our gross anatomy course, our professor read to us a letter that accompanied one of the bodies. It was from the man’s daughter and conveyed her hope that her father’s extraordinary gift would be appreciated. I remember a passage in which she struggled with the thought of the hands that had held her as a child being dissected by strangers. She ended by asking us to treat him well.

We do not “cut up” bodies. We study people who have donated their bodies in the hope that others might benefit from their gift. I hope that the unfortunate word choice appearing in the Class Notes represents editorial license taken by those who have had no reason to consider these issues, as opposed to a young physician disrespecting a patient and a teacher.

PETER OISHI M.D. '92
Oakland, Calif.

In the World but Not of It

WHY DOES JAMES KURTH KEEP TRYING TO SQUARE THE CIRCLE?

By Alisa Giardinelli

Because as a deck and gunnery officer in the U.S. Navy, he learned the best way to motivate his crew of 50 high school dropouts was “to establish rules and incentives that were predictable and fair.” Because he later found that approach was also the best way to teach Harvard and Swarthmore undergraduates. Because while home ported in Japan, he became famous for having a voice that could be heard from one end of the ship to the other, “even in storms.” Because while teaching at the U.S. Naval War College, he helped develop a new strategy for the U.S. Navy that was designed to deter—but if necessary defeat—the Soviet Union in a non-nuclear global war. Because, for that work, he received the Department of the Navy Medal for Meritorious Civilian Service, awarded for his contributions to maritime strategy. Because he enjoys the irony that while his plan was being implemented, Mikhail Gorbachev came to power and made not just the strategy but the entire Soviet Union obsolete. Because he once spent the night in Trotter Hall to prevent pranksters from moving the building’s furniture outdoors. Because he leaps to his feet when proclaiming his love for Charles DeGaulle and European marching music. Because as a self-professed cheese-aholic, he once went 10 cheese-free days in Switzerland through “a heroic act of Prussian and naval willpower.” Because he considers himself an evangelical Christian and is one of the ruling elders in his church. Because his classes on defense policy and international politics are among the most popular on campus. Because he is the author of more than 80 professional articles and the editor of two volumes in those fields. Because he thinks political science as a discipline is a fraud.

What is your idea of earthly happiness?

To do what one does well. This was the view of Aristotle.

What do you consider the lowest depths of misery?

When one feels isolated and cut off from others. Aristotle also said human beings are social beings. In American society with its ideology of liberal individualism, an individual thinks he finds liberation in being liberated from all constraints. But no constraints mean no commitments, and no commitments mean no connections.

When do you feel most indulgent?

My idea of food is cheese, so it’s a pizza with double cheese, pepperoni, and anchovies. Cheese and salt. And Caribbean sunshine.

Who are your heroes of fiction?

Faust. He has great talents and ambitions, but he faces great frustrations. He is tempted to create a world in his own image, but he can only do so at a great cost to his soul. This is the embodiment of an eternal tension between humans and gods.

Who are your real-life heroes?

Charles DeGaulle, he’s my kind of guy. Also Samuel Huntington. He was my thesis adviser at Harvard.

How do you navigate the different environments of Swarthmore College and the conservative Christian community?

It is my faith, my grounding in my church, that is the foundation that makes me feel comfortable there and in other parts of my life. It gives me strength, direction, and perspective that makes Swarthmore life enjoyable and meaningful. However, many of the members of my church are fans of the president, so that is sometimes uncomfortable for me.

What is your best quality?

I have a reputation for reliability and responsibility, for solving intractable problems.

Your worst?

Self-righteous anger. Oh yes, 2,000 years ago in Jerusalem, I’d be a pharisee, and I’d be murderous.

Do you have a motto?

“Let’s try to square the circle.” We should look for ways to find new solutions by looking at an old problem from a new perspective.

Does the regard in which your students hold you surprise you at all?

It’s gratifying. You have got to begin with the students’ hopes and fears, joys and tears. If you put the student at the center, things will go right. It’s like a Copernican revolution. That, I believe, is what a professor is called to do.

Almost all of my colleagues at other institutions find teaching to be a boring experience and often a depressing one. I’m always sympathetic but amazed. I’ve spent my entire adult life teaching students who are bright, enthusiastic, and creative, and it’s been wonderful. Because of that, I think Swarthmore is a national treasure. It’s certainly a treasure in my life.

For a complete set of interview notes, including Professor Kurth’s views on the Iraq War, the worst U.S. president, and what he would do if appointed secretary of defense, visit <http://www.swarthmore.edu/news/kurth/>.



ELEFTHERIOS KOSTANS

Claude C. Smith Professor of Political Science
James Kurth has taught at Swarthmore since 1973.

PLANNING AHEAD

“I decided to attend Swarthmore in 1952 because it was considered the best small college in the country, especially for women at that time. Its reputation has only grown since then. Through my volunteer service to Swarthmore and my annual and planned gifts, I’m proud to continue my association with the College today. I’m eagerly anticipating my 50th reunion next June.”

—Gretchen Mann Handwerger '56



At Swarthmore, Gretchen majored in political science and international relations, edited *The Phoenix*, and captained the women’s golf team. During the Kennedy administration, she became an administrator at the Peace Corps, where she served for 17 years, 2 of them as acting director. She later joined the World Bank, where she became its representative to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development in Paris. In retirement, she has served as an election volunteer in emerging democracies such as Bosnia and Kosovo. She served Swarthmore as president of the Alumni Association from 1993 to 1995 and is class agent for the Class of 1956. In 1996, Gretchen made her first planned gift, a pooled income fund gift, followed by a charitable gift annuity in 2002. These gifts, along with the bequest for Swarthmore that she included in her estate plans, make Gretchen a member of Swarthmore’s Legacy Circle.

To learn how gift planning at Swarthmore could work for you, call the Planned Giving Office at (610) 328-8323, e-mail plannedgiving@swarthmore.edu for a confidential consultation, or visit the planned giving Web site at pg.swarthmore.edu.