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The cover: In an undated photo of the University nursery school, students appear incredibly disciplined. Courtesy the Library's Special Collections Research Center.

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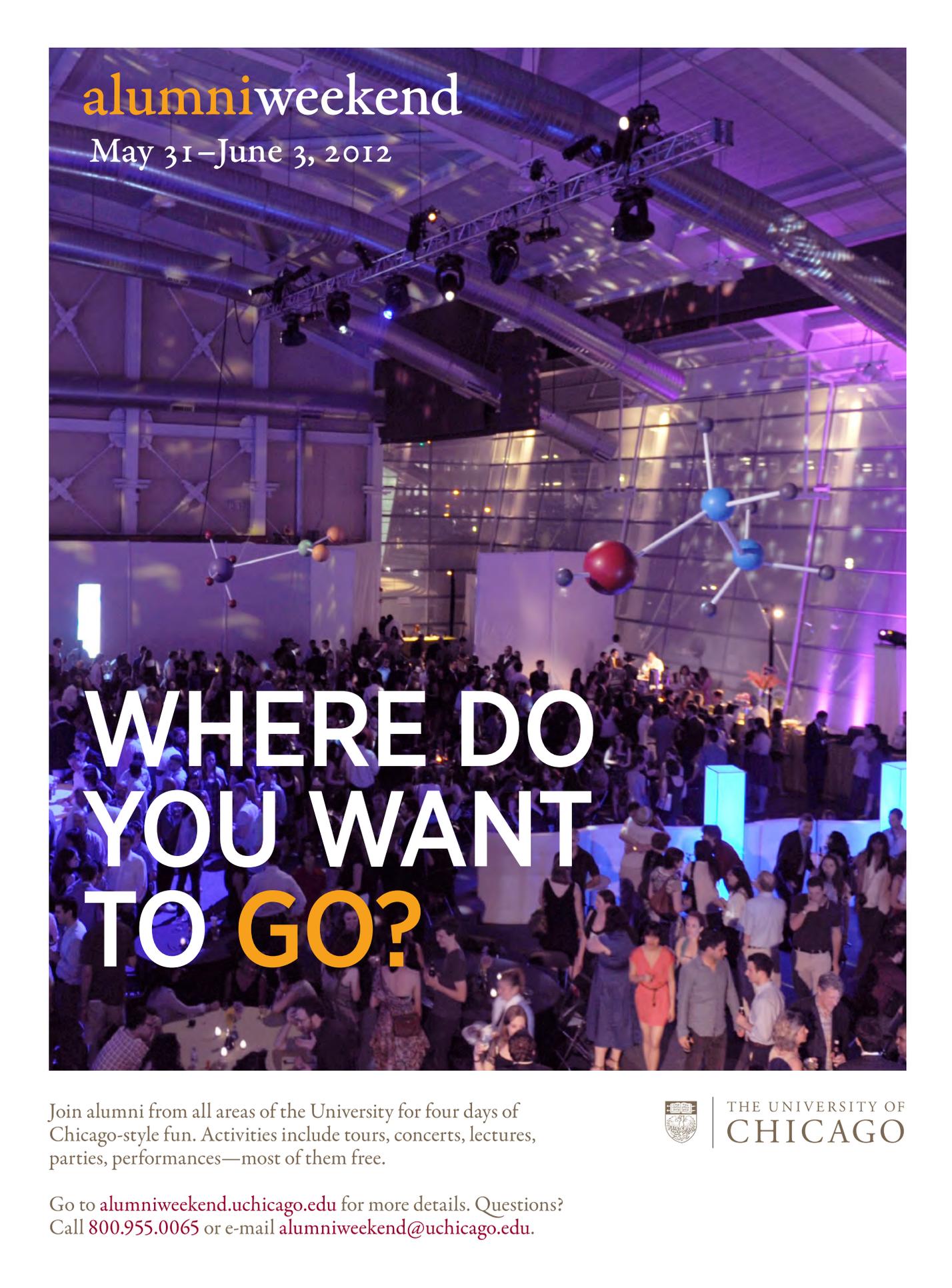
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So much to learn

BY AMY BRAVERMAN PUMA

Get your teaching certificate,” my mother advised me as a teenager. It would be “something to fall back on.” I wanted to be a journalist, then ranked one of the lowest-paying careers (could teaching have been much higher?). It didn’t sound very stable to her. Although I didn’t follow her suggestion, in my family the value of education and teaching is ingrained. My mother is a former preschool teacher and director, kindergarten teacher, and current second-grade teacher. My sister has taught middle and high school.

When my mom’s school adopted an early edition of the Everyday Mathematics curriculum, developed at Chicago in the 1980s and ’90s, she talked about it at home. (It got mixed reviews. Although “in theory it was a very good program” with a “goal of having kids think mathematically,” she says now, it didn’t give students enough practice. Later versions, she stresses, made improvements. “And the games were very good.”)

So one of my first impressions of the University of Chicago was that it was a place that showed teachers how to teach. I didn’t know yet about John Dewey, the Lab Schools, or Chicago’s reputation as a teacher of teachers. But when I arrived at the *Magazine* in 2002, I learned how seriously the University and alumni take their education mandate, both in the wider world and in the College and graduate curricula. It was a subject near to this community’s heart, and I had reason to relate.

In the past decade the University has strengthened its education *c. vitae*, enhancing existing programs and creating new initiatives to study education, train

teachers, and educate students. Every week seems to bring headline-making research or innovative programs on campus. Education at Chicago, we thought, would no doubt be a rich topic for a special *Magazine* issue.

Yet even with 96 pages, we feel ourselves falling short of this big subject. In a country where public schools are failing, we’ve included a few attempts to address the problem—the University’s charter school campuses and research into incentives for students, teachers, and parents. (And we don’t even discuss alumni experts who oppose incentives overall.) Our time line could capture only so many milestones. Our interviews with alumni and teachers who have formed professional and personal friendships left out countless great stories. We didn’t cover our many alumni who serve as presidents at impressive colleges and universities.

For us this issue proved the axiom: the more we learned, the more we realized how much we didn’t know (or didn’t have time, space, or manpower to report, write, and publish by deadline). I don’t have to ask *Magazine* readers to write us about what facts we left out or got wrong. But in addition, if you have a personal story, or an alumnus or professor whose education-related work should go noted, please share it with us at uchicago-magazine@uchicago.edu.

—Amy Braverman Puma

One of my first impressions of the University was that it was a place that showed teachers how to teach.

LETTERS

Really? In the Nov–Dec/11 issue (Alumni News), you list the Top 10 singles from *Billboard*'s Top 100 from 1978. Was anyone in the College listening to Top 40 radio in 1978? Here's an alternative list for you—the 1978 Listener Poll from WXRT for best albums of the year.

- ◆ *Darkness on the Edge of Town*, BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN
- ◆ *Some Girls*, ROLLING STONES
- ◆ *Who Are You*, THE WHO
- ◆ *This Year's Model*, ELVIS COSTELLO
- ◆ *The Cars*, THE CARS
- ◆ *More Songs about Buildings and Food*, TALKING HEADS
- ◆ *52nd Street*, BILLY JOEL
- ◆ *Wavelength*, VAN MORRISON
- ◆ *Q. Are We Not Men? A. We Are Devo*, DEVO
- ◆ *Waiting for Columbus*, LITTLE FEAT

Head-scratching covers

Your magazine covers are so high concept they're over my head, which is already in the clouds. Bring it down!

*John Rossheim, AB'80
Providence, Rhode Island*



Kindred socialists

I identify with Richard Sennett, AB'64 ("Life in Practice," Nov–Dec/11). We are the same age and we both spent time in public housing. My mother, as I am, was a graduate of SSA, although I am not musically inclined. I agree with his statement of working locally as I do, rather than in national politics, putting the "social" into socialism. Thank you for sharing.

*Wes Mukoyama, AM'72
Santa Clara, California*

My memory is fuzzy, but I think I may have seen the Who at the Chicago Stadium that year in support of *Who Are You*. *More Songs about Buildings and Food* is one of the last vinyl LPs I ever bought (it's now upstairs in my son's bedroom since he believes vinyl sounds better). Never saw the Heads in concert. My loss.

*Richard L. Benedict, AB'85
(Class of '79)
Carmel, Indiana*

Is Freud dead?

How long will scholars, such as Richard Sennett, who incorporate psychoanalysis into their work go unchallenged? Back in the pre-Jurassic era, when I was working toward a PhD in human development (1968–72), I remember noticing how poorly Freud's theories stood up in empirical studies; for example, in a cross-cultural study on the Oedipal Complex, there was no evidence that it existed in any of the cultures studied.

The writer, Max Eastman, who knew Freud and had himself been psychoanalyzed, reported that Freud had based his Oedipal theory on his observations of a single person—Freud himself (*Great Companions: Critical Memories of Some Famous Friends*, Farrar, Straus, and Cudahy, 1942).

Paul McHugh, former chair of the psychiatry department at Johns Hopkins Medical School, wrote in the *Wall Street Journal* not long ago, "Freud is deader than Elvis" (November 3, 2007).

*Mark Borinsky, PhD'72
Towson, Maryland*

Examined life

Thanks so much for "Life in Practice." I used *Corrosion* in a freshman class years ago, and students found it both interesting and relevant. We need more thinkers who help us reflect on how/where we work and live. I was overjoyed to see, as

Wayne Booth [AM'47, PhD'50] would have said, the intellectual company he keeps. And that story about Cabrini Green is lovely; as a native South Side Chicagoan who got one degree at the U of C, I also did an NEH [grant] one year with a well-known scholar in rhetoric, E. P. J. Corbett—who also lived in Cabrini Green while in grad school.

*George T. Karnezis, AM'66
Portland, Oregon*

What microfinance finances

Having taken my fair share of microfinance classes in graduate school (including a seminar by John Hatch, founder of FINCA), I have no major problem with microfinance institutions making a profit ("Ends and Means," Nov–Dec/11). While microcredit institutions are in the business of helping people out of poverty, they are also inherently in the business of making money.

The problem I do have with these models is that loans are being used by the poor as Westerners use their credit cards. While some money might be invested in a business venture or to build stock, there is no limit on the money being used for consumption, therefore enabling the client to continue to take out loans, repay them, and take out another loan, mostly financing consumption. Is this wrong? Are we to judge that microloans are used for food instead of business when Americans have the highest level of credit-card debt? This situation would only be appalling if the microcredit institutions were not aware of it. Fortunately (or maybe unfortunately), they are aware that this happens, yet clients move from loan to larger loan without being monitored.

Lack of resources is usually given as the excuse for the absence of monitoring and following up on clientele and their businesses. The loan-application process is made as simple and easy as possible. Eligibility for the next loan is simply repayment of the past loan, not an evaluation of how the business is doing and where the money is going. Granted, no microfinance institution claims that the loan goes solely to business; the poor will use money for immediate needs. However, microcredit has been marketed as entrepreneurial investment, business growth, and economic development. This may be true, on a small scale, if the loans are invested in the business and if monitoring is conducted to see how the

business has grown.

*Ana-Maria Sinitean, AB'07
Washington, DC*

Size matters

Michael Fitzgerald refers to Bangladesh as a “relatively small country,” lumping it in with Nicaragua and Bolivia. True, all three don’t have much land. True, all three economies are underdeveloped. But Bangladesh has the ninth-largest population (at least 142 million) in the world (between Russia and Japan), while Bolivia is 80th (10.4 million) and Nicaragua is 109th (5.8 million).

*Dane S. Claussen, MBA'86
Las Vegas*

Good deeds rewarded

Jack Tucker’s “A Friday Night Story” (Nov–Dec/11) brought back memories of the kindnesses my mother and father would describe neighbors having shown their poor, immigrant parents during the 1930s and 40s. My Italian grandparents also had a doctor who would forgo payment or accept cheerfully a chicken in lieu of money from my grandfather, a butcher. My father, every year until his benefactor quit smoking, would send cigars to a pharmacist for whom he’d worked as a teenager who had given him \$200 to go to college. Yet we never had anything resembling the debt of gratitude Mr. Tucker’s family must have felt for that unnamed priest who risked his life to shelter their daughter. Did he survive? What about the other children under his care? Did Tucker’s parents ever see this kind man again? I hope we can hear the story with all the rich details that Mr. Tucker conveys so well.

*Andrea Senkowski, PhD'94
Bethesda, Maryland*

Jack Tucker, PhD'72, responds:

The priest did not survive. Not long after he returned my sister to her parents, his rectory was attacked by robbers who believed that the priest must have held Jewish children for gold, and therefore must have had a large amount of money hidden. This was not true. The priest had not kept the children for money. The robbers murdered him for gold that he did not possess.

First toast

“Years of Cheers” (Nov–Dec/11) noted that the 107 empty champagne bottles on Professor Stuart Rice’s shelf repre-

sented only one-half of the bottles used to celebrate a successful final PhD exam.

In a photograph (below), Stuart is holding both his first student’s bottle and his most recent student’s bottle. I was Stuart’s first student. I have kept my empty champagne bottle for over 51 years (right). My experience as a graduate student with Stuart and as a member of his generalized family since that time is encapsulated in a tribute I wrote for a journal devoted to him on his 60th birthday. A condensed version follows:

I have known Stuart Rice almost my entire scientific life. Indeed, if it hadn’t been for him, I might not have had a scientific life. When I first heard of Stuart, I had been at the University about two quarters. The chair of the chemistry department had just given me a warning: I was not narrow and deep in my scientific knowledge—I wasn’t even shallow and broad. I was about to be tossed out of graduate school. Stuart had just arrived, preceded by a tidal wave of rumors of great brilliance—a theorist who did experiments. It had become eminently clear that I too was to be a theorist, a theorist who carried out no experiments.

So I went to see Stuart. The blackboard had written on it a list of all the important problems of physical chemistry. Was that list a daily reminder of the problems Stuart needed to solve? Or were they there for his future students to solve? Or was it some mixture of both?

He agreed to take a risk and let me work with him. I can say without exaggeration that Stuart Rice changed my life. He gave me the opportunity to carry out independent science. There were no lessons on “how” to carry out scientific research, no “scientific method,” if you will, just doing it. I did it. But while I was doing it, I felt enormous support, interest, and active participation, and I was always taken seriously.

Those feelings and their reality did



not end with graduate school. They have been an essential part of my entire life.

*Robert A. Harris, AM'59, PhD'60
Berkeley, California*

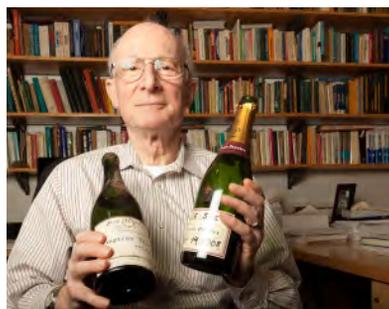
Winter’s tale

The Nov–Dec/11 issue had some interesting material. The article about Bernard Sahlins, AB’43, resonated with me (“Word Play,” UChicago Journal). Being in the performing arts for more than a half century, I produced many staged readings, in the style Mr. Sahlins described, with a bare stage and performers seated on chairs, stools, or the floor, clad in black plants or skirts and white shirts or blouses. We did scenes (Shakespeare and others), poems, sonnets, original pieces, and music. ...

The same article referenced Nicholas Rudall. I remember a Court Theatre production of *Richard III* with Mr. Rudall as Richard, directed by Jim O’Reilly. My role was Sir Robert Brakenbury, and the role of Lord Stanley was performed by Don Swanton, SB’66, MBA’77. In one rehearsal of the final scene, in which Lord Stanley crowns Richmond as King Henry VII, the first Tudor king, saying of the crown: “Wear it, enjoy it, make much of it.” Don then added, with a twinkle in his eye and a thick Yiddish accent: “And if it doesn’t fit, bring it back and I’ll fix it up.”

I further remember seeing an indoor production of *Coriolanus* with David Ingle, PhD’63, again with a minimal set and a brilliant performance.

The article about Doc Films (“Reel Stories,” Alumni News) brought back pleasant memories of being invited to



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When you graduated, it said something about you. It still does.



GARY SLUTKIN, MD'75

Background: After medical school, Dr. Slutkin completed his residency and infectious disease training at UCSF and SF General Hospital. He then worked with the World Health Organization on controlling epidemics. In 1995, Dr. Slutkin founded and now runs CeaseFire, which uses disease-control methods to reduce violence.

A Chicago Grad Is: "In medical school we were taught to go very deeply to fully understand a problem. My medical school class included physicists, social scientists, and other disciplines, and I also learned the value of viewing problems from many angles."

Giving Back: Dr. Slutkin is involved with reducing violence in Chicago and elsewhere. "My version of giving back to the school comes mostly in the form of helping the neighborhoods become safer." **BMW North America is proud to support Dr. Slutkin's efforts with a donation to the Odyssey Scholarship Program.**

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see John Ford's *Stagecoach*, and Barbara Bernstein, AB'62, doing a spot-on impersonation of Claire Trevor, when she tells the Ringo Kid (John Wayne) upon his seeing that she's about to enter a house of ill repute: "Kid, I told you not to follow me."

In the Advanced Degrees section Alan Wiener, MBA'65, asks if anyone remembers the Tropical Hut restaurant. I remember it well, and the big, blonde Brunhilde hostess ("How many in your party?").

*Alan M. Charlens, SB'58, PhD'63
San Diego*

Fire or ice

Raymond Pierrehumbert's complaint about anthropogenic global warming skeptics not basing their ideas on peer-reviewed literature is more proof that the idea that carbon dioxide plays a dominant role in regulating our climate, and that man is his own enemy in his use of fossil fuels, was embedded in the cement of political correctness from the start (Letters, Nov-Dec/11). The religion of environmentalism has become beloved by politicians and big investors alike and wildly promoted by [the likes of] Al Gore. The gullible media was sold on the scare tactics, and even the publishers of peer-reviewed science were afraid to publish contrary articles. The fact that over 30,000 US scientists, myself included (geologist), signed a petition to the US Senate not to sign a bill that would bind us to the Kyoto Protocols, was never publicized to my knowledge. All I saw was the utterly false claim by AGW proponents that all real scientists believed in global warming.

I had the good fortune to do my undergraduate and a year of graduate work at UChicago with one of the finest geological faculties anywhere, and it was so embedded in my memory when I chanced to read the Kyoto Protocols that I couldn't believe for awhile that they were serious. It ran contrary to what I knew of ancient climates, so I read everything relative to climate science and several books by climate scientists who agreed with me. I am convinced that we are still in a glacial climate, in the fifth interglacial of the Pleistocene Ice Ages. In our equatorial zone today we are only four degrees Celsius warmer than we were at the last glacial maximum 23,000 years ago. As long as our polar regions are iced up,

Next time, you might as well print someone's statement that gravity is a hoax.

we are susceptible to another 100,000 year glaciation event No. 6. The idea of keeping temperature at the present level by climate engineering is likely to be both ruinously expensive and counterproductive. We need to warm up a bit to avoid the return of the ice.

*Robert R. Reynolds, SB'39
Tucson, Arizona*

Not up for debate

I find it irritating that you decided to print a reader's letter denying the link between anthropogenic carbon dioxide emissions and climate change (Letters, Sept-Oct/11). While it is important to honor freedom of expression, it is even more important for a university-affiliated magazine to respect the educational mission of its parent institution. The causal relationship between carbon dioxide and rising global temperatures has been established beyond doubt in multiple independent experiments, using different methodologies and a rigorous scientific peer-review process.

While there continues to be a lively debate among scientists about the directions and strengths of the effects of climate change, the overwhelming majority of climate scientists no longer question the causal effect of anthropogenic emissions on our climate. I am sure that every climate physicist at the University or Argonne National Lab would agree with that statement. It is therefore worrying that the *University of Chicago Magazine* accepts the risk of misleading its readers by allowing the voice of uninformed and misguided people to be heard on such a prominent page solely on grounds of freedom of expression. Next time, you might as well print someone's statement that gravity is a hoax.

*Dominic Hofstetter, MBA'10
London*

Response to call for politicians

In response to the request by Joyce (Elman) McLean, U-High'49, AB'52, (Letters, Nov-Dec/11) [asking if any

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LETTERS

campus “politicos” remained politically active], I am pleased to share my own record of political activity in my hometown of Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

In 1968 I managed the campaign of an economics professor at the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee for mayor of our city. He lost. A year later I ran for a citywide seat on the Milwaukee School Board and finished second with more than 28,000 votes. Although not in public office, I remain politically active by writing a blog, the *Glazerbeam*, at publictrough.com.

Another classmate from Milwaukee, Bernardine Rae (Dohrn) Ayers, AB’63, JD’67, was elected national secretary of Students for a Democratic Society.

Gerald S. Glazer, SB’63
Milwaukee

Ufologist responds

I was pleased with the profile about me in the Sept–Oct/11 issue (“Science? Fiction?”), both the tone and the accuracy. However, the critiques in the Nov–Dec/11 issue seemed to reflect proclamations rather than investigation of star travel or flying saucers. There was no reference to five major scientific studies and no note taken of my five books and many papers.

David Syphers, AB’03, speaks of stars 1,000 parsecs away. Why? There are well over 1,000 stars within a mere 55 light-years of the earth. The two sun-like stars on which I have focused as likely visitor origins are Zeta 1 and Zeta 2 Reticuli in the southern sky constellation of Reticulum. They are only 39.3 light-years from here, an eighth of a light-year apart from each other, and a cool billion years older than the sun. They are discussed in detail in *Captured! The Betty and Barney Hill UFO Experience*, which I coauthored with Kathleen Marden, Betty’s niece, and also in my *Flying Saucers and Science*.

Syphers thinks fusion rockets would be impossible because we have not yet built a large fusion power plant. There is absolutely no connection between the two projects. Analogously there is no connection between the exotic fis-



“Just the thing to keep me occupied during the holidays,” wrote Afi-Odelia Efuru Scruggs, AB’75, about our Phoenixflake (mag.uchicago.edu/snowflake). Janet Capodagli, an SSD staffer, displayed hers in the Medici Bakery window.

sion nuclear rockets successfully operated on the ground in the 1960s and our many large nuclear power plants.

Keith Backman, SB’69, refers to “an occasional visual experience which some subjects cannot personally grasp.” Try looking at *Blue Book Special Report 14* with more than 250 tables, graphs, and tabulations of 3,201 sightings of which 21.5 percent could not be identified, separate from those labeled insufficient information (9.3 percent). The better the sighting quality, the more likely it was unidentifiable. Chi-square analysis showed the probability the unknowns were just missed *knowns* was less than 1 percent. Contrary to his comments, there have been loads of radar visual cases. A number were included by atmospheric physicist James McDonald in his congressional testimony in 1968.

SETI has demonstrated a great deal of kookiness but has done very well for itself despite providing no evidence. See my chapter “The Cult of SETI” in *FSS*. Peter Pesch, SB’55, SM’56, PhD’60, should give them the entrepreneurial award.

Stanton T. Friedman, SB’55, SM’56
Fredericton, New Brunswick

Where’s the science?

It was a little bit embarrassing to read the glowing coverage of Stanton Friedman. To say that Mr. Friedman has conducted his work “methodically, [as a] researcher, a steadfast debater, an investigator, a scholar” is almost certainly true. But to argue that he has acted “as a scientist,” drawing his conclusions

that “aliens had visited Earth” and that “the US government was hiding what it knew,” mischaracterizes how a scientific approach is used to search for life in the universe beyond Earth.

Scientific questions (including one of the greatest: “Are we alone in the universe?”) are investigated in the laboratory, in the observatory, and in the arena of internationally peer-reviewed journals, where scientific consensus is reached. Scientific questions are not settled in the popular debate hall (even one as illustrious as the Oxford Union). Nor, I suppose, are they settled in the letters department of alumni magazines (even one as illustrious as the U of C’s). Key elements of the scientific enterprise include the reproducibility of scientific observations, the testing of mechanical hypotheses that allow predictions about future events to be made, and the logical necessity of a researcher’s conclusions. While Mr. Friedman has collected a large body of oral histories and government reports regarding encounters with the unknown, it is by no means necessary to draw the conclusion that aliens have visited our world. One might as easily, and as groundlessly, argue that angels, fairies, elves, or any other mythical beings are responsible for unidentified flying objects.

The search for life beyond our home planet is an exciting scientific enterprise, and is one that is being undertaken by astronomers, physicists, astrobiologists, and geologists. Many of these scientists are researchers or alumni affiliated with the U of C and are in-

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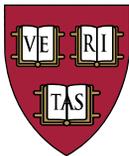
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LETTERS

volved in the difficult work of the SETI project (to detect the radio signals of advanced civilizations) and the NASA Kepler mission (to find habitable planets around other stars). While glowing coverage of Mr. Friedman's work makes for interesting human-interest reading, his zealous and nonscientific effort to answer one of our greatest questions sows confusion among those interested in finding out what is known about the search for life beyond Earth and the scientifically legitimate efforts being undertaken to find out more.

*Joseph Levy, SB'04
Corvallis, Oregon*

They may be out there

It should not be a sin to find curiosity and humility among competent graduates of the University. The haughty disdain and contempt for your profile of Stanton Friedman are like pebbles caught in shoes—understandable, small irritations. In eighth-grade science classes we all learned that the first rule of the scientific method is “to observe.”

Keith Backman, David Syphers, and others might benefit from visiting a library, or a used bookstore, to find *The Day after Roswell: A Former Pentagon Official Reveals the US Government's Shocking UFO Cover-Up* (Pocket Books, 1997) by Col. Philip J. Corso (retired). In 1961 Corso was given command of one of the Pentagon's highly classified weapons-development budgets and was made privy to the US government's greatest secret: the dismantling and appropriation of the Roswell extraterrestrial spacecraft by the Army. This book traces the subsequent

progress of their formerly secret work and shows how Roswell artifacts were integrated into the military arsenal and the private business sector—IBM, Hughes Aircraft, Bell Labs, and Dow Corning—without their knowledge. Precursors for integrated circuit chips, fiber optics, lasers, and super-tenacity fibers were among the results of the legacy. This book, the first of its kind, forces one to reconsider the past—and especially our role in the universe.

A degree from the U of C does not automatically convey wisdom, though it does imply that one can learn from our past. For years, scientists would routinely discard penicillin growing in glass petri dishes, and then, one day, Alexander Fleming realized that it might have a protective function, treating some bacterial infections. Life continues—even amidst errors of judgment.

*Charles Duan Roth, SM'63, MD'65
Van Wert, Ohio*

No time for small print

Bibbidi bobbidi boo, you blew it (“Editor's Notes,” Sept–Oct/11). What were you thinking? The smaller format also comes with smaller print and spacing. Compare a recent issue with your makeover, and you will immediately see what I mean.

We are in the iPad and Kindle age where a click reformats a page and enlarges the print. When I get a publication that is hard to see, I toss it into the wastebasket. Sorry, but the Sept–Oct/11 issue goes out.

If I can't see it, I won't read it. I think I speak for loads of alumni in suggesting that Pentagram refund your money.

*David H. Fong, DB'63
Reno, Nevada*

Check the lyrics

I was amused by the song composed and sung by several of my classmates and published in the Nov–Dec/11 issue

Scientific questions are not settled in the popular debate hall. Nor, I suppose, are they settled in the letters departments of alumni magazines.

(p. 71). However, I was also appalled by the fact that the song thoroughly mixes positive economics with normative issues. The distinction between the two was stressed heavily by Nobel Laureate Milton Friedman, AM'33, in his graduate price theory sequence (two courses of 12 weeks each).

In my view, the failure of Chicago economists among others to carefully distinguish between positive economics (scientific approaches leading to testable hypotheses about behavior) and normative economics (where value judgments play major roles) led, unfortunately, to what I have called “the Chicago Cult of Economics,” as contrasted with “the Chicago School of Economics”—a group to which I proudly belong.

*Robert M. Fearn, PhD'68
Raleigh, North Carolina*

Lessons from Sinaiko

I was a physics major, taking courses in the College, one of which was taught by Herman Sinaiko, AB'47, PhD'61 (“Goodbye, Mr. Sinaiko,” Web Exclusive, November 22, 2011). He was one of those humanities instructors who could hold your attention, fuel your interest. He's one of the Chicago faculty that I shall always remember.

*Edmund Becker SB'58, PhD'63
New Durham, New Hampshire*

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BLAST FROM THE PAST

I must wholeheartedly agree ... about class size. First the University hires yet another vice president, then increases class size, and now, the U of C didn't even make a recently published list of the ten least-fun schools. Are athletic scholarships and booster clubs next?

**Victor S. Sloan, AB'80,
in the October 1997 issue**



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STUDIES

Why be hopeful?

BY TIMOTHY KNOWLES, THE JOHN DEWEY DIRECTOR OF THE URBAN EDUCATION INSTITUTE

In 2005 my colleagues at the Consortium on Chicago School Research tracked every student in the Chicago Public Schools from ninth grade through college. The results were shocking. Eight percent of Chicago Public Schools ninth graders earned a four-year college degree by the time they were 25. Among African American boys, the figure dropped to 3 percent. Only four in ten African American boys even made it to high-school graduation. These figures were nothing short of tragic, and the *Chicago Tribune* crystallized the news with a banner headline.

Yet this story does not end in tragedy. Since then we have been working to change the odds. Our first step was to dig deeper and determine what really matters for high-school and college graduation. One critical discovery was that the best predictor of high-school graduation isn't race, income, prior test scores, or the neighborhood a student comes from. Rather, it is freshman-year course performance. It turns out high-school success is not determined by a set of immutable characteristics but rather by the conditions of schooling that educators create—and control.

Empowered by our findings, Chicago Public Schools responded—with freshman-year academies, targeted mentoring, interventions for struggling students, and real-time reports detailing student-specific and school-wide trends.

The result of these multilateral actions may prove to be one of the great success stories in urban schooling. Since 2006 the percentage of students



Urban Education Institute director Timothy Knowles, who joined the University in 2003, is also a clinical professor in the Committee on Education.

finishing freshman year on track to graduate has risen from 55 percent to 73 percent. We now expect more than 5,000 additional students to graduate from Chicago high schools *each year*. Evidence suggests these graduates will live longer, earn more in their lifetimes, vote and volunteer more often, be significantly less likely to go to prison, and have children with higher levels of educational attainment. This is not just cause for hope. It is cause for confidence.

Today the Urban Education Institute is taking aim at the facts revealed in a report we call “The Three Eras,” an analysis of 20 years of progress in Chicago Public Schools. In October we reported that elementary-school reading scores in Chicago have barely moved in two decades. Worse, in the

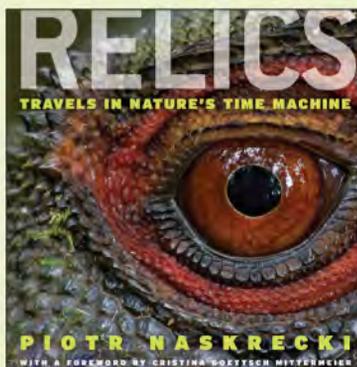
most recent era of reform, schools that began with the lowest levels of achievement were the least likely to improve, contributing to a growing achievement gap between city schools. Addressing this issue will require the type of robust partnership between practitioners, researchers, and policy makers that are driving improvements in Chicago's graduation rates.

Our starting point is empirical evidence we have built over the past 15 years that identifies five essentials for school success. The essentials themselves aren't surprising: ambitious instruction, effective leaders, professional capacity, involved families, and a supportive environment. What *is* surprising is their power. We've found that schools strong on three of five essentials are ten times more likely to make substantial improvement and 30 times less likely to stagnate. And we have shown conclusively that even schools in Chicago's most disadvantaged neighborhoods can thrive if they address the essentials head on.

The Urban Education Institute is working to bring the essentials to life. We are training and supporting the next generation of teachers for Chicago—teachers capable of enacting ambitious instruction every day. This fall we provided parents, teachers, and school leaders across Chicago with detailed, actionable reports about how their schools stack up on the five essentials. On the four campuses of the University of Chicago Charter School, we are using the essentials as our framework for establishing goals and organizing effort. And in the coming year, our new not-for-profit, UChicago Impact, will provide well-tested tools and training to improve school organization, literacy, and college readiness in 27 cities and 16 states.

Bringing effective practice to scale in the education sector is a complex and sometimes daunting challenge. Yet not long ago the problem of high-school dropouts in Chicago seemed intractable. And while that problem is by no means solved, we have made significant progress—providing evidence of what is possible when practitioners, researchers, and policy makers work in partnership to create reliably excellent urban schools nationwide. ♦

CHICAGO



Relics

Travels in Nature's Time Machine

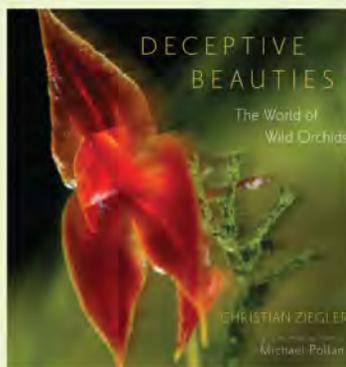
Piotr Naskrecki

Foreword by Cristina Goetsch Mittermeier

"*Relics* is an exciting, adventure-filled, and scientifically important presentation by one of the world's best naturalists and photographers."

—E. O. Wilson

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Deceptive Beauties

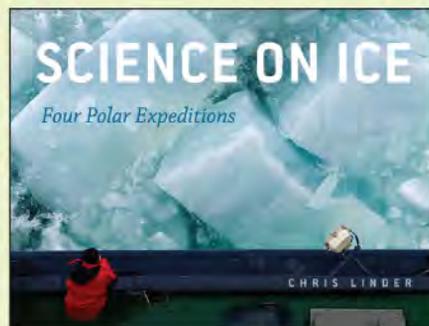
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Christian Ziegler

With an Introduction by Michael Pollan and a Foreword by Natalie Angier

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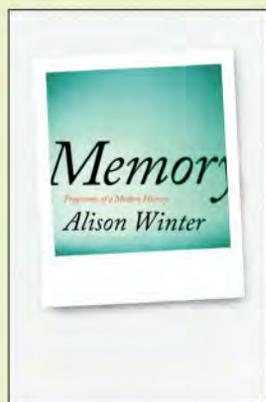
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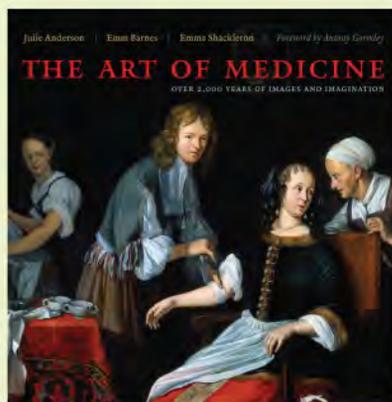
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Alison Winter

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The Art of Medicine

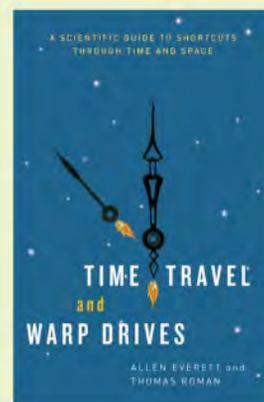
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Allen Everett and Thomas Roman

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UChicago Journal



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ASTRONOMY

Planetary mission

UChicago scientists are looking above and beyond to determine our place in the universe.

Scientists and science-fiction authors alike long theorized that planets beyond Earth's solar system orbited other stars; it stood to reason that if our ordinary, unremarkable sun had planets, then so should many other stars. Now, in less than two decades, the existence of extrasolar planets, or exoplanets, has gone from speculation to scientific fact. Scientists have identified close to 600 exoplanets, and UChicago is joining the search for more.

Many astronomers dream of detecting an Earth-sized planet in the habitable zone, an orbit that's an appropriate distance from its parent star for liquid water to exist on the surface, believed essential for life. In December NASA announced the possible discovery of one such world, but most of the planets found so far, both by large ground-based telescopes and space missions such as the Spitzer Space Telescope and Kepler, don't qualify. They're either gas

giants (too large to be a rocky planet like Earth), orbiting too close to their sun (too hot to have liquid water), or both, and thus incapable of supporting life—at least, any sort of life that we can conceive.

“It is a basic desire of humanity to want to understand our origins and place in the universe,” says **Jacob Bean**, who joined the University in the fall as an assistant professor of astronomy and astrophysics. “The study of extrasolar planets is one of the best ways to seek further knowledge in this area.” Bean’s research focuses on low-mass stars. Using current methods, he explains, a small planet similar to Earth is easier to detect around a small faint star because a large bright star’s light would overwhelm it. In addition, “low-mass stars are the most numerous type of stars in our galaxy. Taking the census of planets around these stars is an important component of understanding the overall planet population.”

Another exoplanet researcher—Daniel Fabrycky—will join Chicago’s astronomers next fall. Fabrycky, now a Hubble postdoctoral fellow at the University of California, Santa Cruz,

uses data from the Kepler planet-hunting satellite to study the exoplanets’ dynamics and orbital mechanics, particularly in solar systems with more than one planet orbiting the same star. “We’d like to know if our arrangement of planets here [in our solar system] is a fluke or is very common,” he says. “The only way to find out is go look for other ones.”

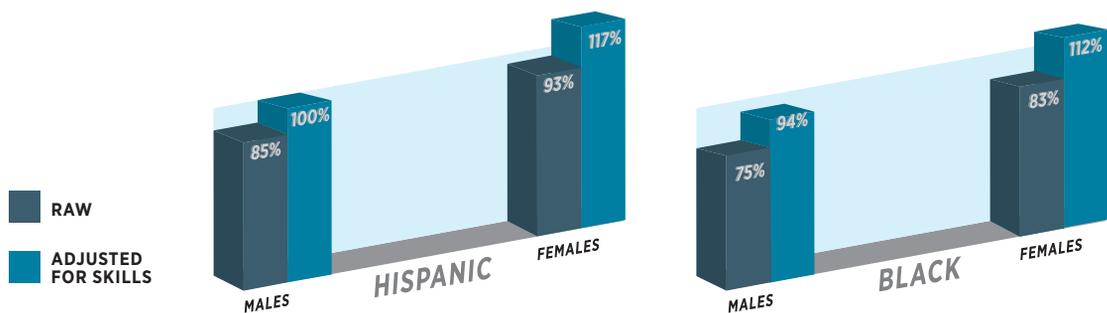
Bean and Fabrycky won’t be alone studying planetary science at Chicago, points out geophysical sciences chair **Michael Foote**, SM’88, PhD’89. “Their research complements ongoing work on planetary atmospheres and the origin and evolution of planetary systems.” For instance, **Dorian Abbot**, assistant professor of geophysical sciences, published a paper in *Astrophysical Journal Letters* last July with then postdoctoral researcher **Eric Switzer**, AB’03, about the possibility of “Steppenwolf planets”—planets hurtling through interstellar space “like a lone wolf wandering the galactic steppe,” as Abbot and Switzer put it—that might support life under an insulating ocean of ice. Assistant professor of geophysical sciences **Fred Ciesla**

is building computer models of protoplanetary disks, the loose agglomeration of material that surrounds a star in its earliest days, to determine what physical properties cause planetary systems to form.

Chicago’s new focus on exoplanets stems in part from its commitment to “big glass,” says astronomy and astrophysics chair **Rocky Kolb**, referring to the University’s commitment to the 6.5-meter Magellan Telescopes in Chile and their successor, the 24.5-meter Giant Magellan Telescope. Once complete in 2019, the telescope should be powerful enough to detect Earth-sized planets in the habitable zones around sun-like stars. Future telescopes and satellite missions should be able to discern not just where the Earth-like planets are but also the kind of climate they have, the composition of their atmospheres, and perhaps even the gaseous signatures of life. Detecting life on other worlds would be a major advance for biochemistry and evolutionary biology, among other fields, and, as Fabrycky says, “that ‘gee-whiz’ factor can’t be underestimated.”—*Benjamin Recchie, AB’03*

FIG. 1
STOP GAP

HOURLY WAGES FOR BLACKS AND HISPANICS AS A PERCENTAGE OF WHITE WAGES



More than overt discrimination, what now drives America’s achievement gap between blacks and whites, says Chicago economist and Nobel laureate James J. Heckman, is a lack of skills. Arguing for the importance of early-childhood education, Heckman writes in a 2011 National

Bureau of Economic Research working paper that the skills that determine success—not only what Heckman calls “smarts,” but also conscientiousness, perseverance, and sociability—emerge before children begin school.

To demonstrate the importance of skills versus racial discrimina-

tion, Heckman took the hourly wage shortfalls for adult blacks and Hispanics versus whites and adjusted them for skills, based on scholastic ability scores. For African American men, the wage gap shrank from 25 percent to 6 percent, and for Hispanic men it shrank to “essentially zero.”—Lydiaalye Gibson

GRAPHIC BY BRENT MAYNARD



The casual reflections in *Five Chiefs* reflect badly on Stevens, says Epstein.

LAW

Dissenting opinions

A former Supreme Court justice's memoir inspires praise and criticism.

John Paul Stevens, U-High'37, AB'41, has lived a University of Chicago life. He grew up in Hyde Park, attended the Lab Schools from kindergarten through high school, and graduated from the College. Even decades into his legal career, the UChicago connections continued: in 1975 former University president and Law School dean Edward H. Levi, then the US attorney general, recommended that President Ford nominate Stevens to the Supreme Court.

Now 91 and retired after 35 years as an associate justice, the third-longest tenure in history, Stevens returned to campus in October on a promotional tour for his book *Five Chiefs* (Little, Brown, 2011). A line stretched from the International House auditorium, where Stevens would speak, down a hallway as long as a city block, then snaked into a room where the overflow crowd would have to watch on television.

In a genial conversation with **Dennis Hutchinson**, the William Rainey Harper professor in the College and a senior lecturer in the Law School, Stevens discussed *Five Chiefs*. It's a personal memoir of his professional life, focused on impressions of the chief justices he knew as a clerk fresh from Northwestern Law School, as an attorney arguing before the court, and later as a colleague. The hour-long discussion also touched on controversial death-penalty and campaign-finance cases and how much the Supreme Court confirmation process has changed.

Less than three years after *Roe v. Wade*, Stevens did not face a single question about abortion in his Senate hearing, which was not televised. And when a witness went on at length "claiming that I acted dishonorably in 1967 as counsel to a commission investigating the integrity of an Illinois Supreme Court decision," Senate Judiciary Committee chair James Eastland spared Stevens from having to hear it. Eastland invited the nominee to his office, where they sipped bourbon while the court reporter documented the "diatribe" for the record. "The statement of the witness is quoted in full in the transcript of the hearings," Stevens writes. "What Senator Eastland and I had to say in his office was—and shall remain—off the record."

Not much else remains off the re-

cord in the book. Stevens recounts a December 2000 Christmas-party conversation with fellow justice Stephen Breyer about the pending *Bush v. Gore* case. They agreed, Stevens writes, that the Bush team's petition to stop the Florida recount was "frivolous." And he needles William Rehnquist's penchant for adorning his robes and his prose. "Like the gold stripes on his robes, Chief Justice Rehnquist's writing about sovereignty was ostentatious and more reflective of the ancient British monarchy than our modern republic."

The I-House audience gave Stevens a standing ovation, but his musings were not so well received elsewhere, inspiring differing views even within the Law School. In the *Washington Independent Review of Books*, **Geoffrey Stone**, JD'71, the Edward H. Levi distinguished service professor, called *Five Chiefs* "inside baseball at its best," an "illuminating, instructive, and satisfying" glimpse into the Supreme Court. But Stevens's memoir—and the informal tenor of his public comments about it—sparked a rebuke from Law School senior lecturer **Richard Epstein**. In the Hoover Institution journal *Defining Ideas*, Epstein wrote that Stevens "would be wise to keep these disjointed and cavalier reflections to himself."

Stevens's reflections on the 5–4 decision in *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission* (2010) that declared corporate campaign-finance restrictions an infringement on free speech especially bothered Epstein. While on the Court, Stevens expressed comprehensive disapproval of the ruling in a 90-page dissent. At International House, he joked that, by the majority's interpretation, the campaign-funded Watergate break-in would have been considered protected speech.

"What on earth is he thinking?" Epstein writes, noting that the First Amendment does not permit criminal activity and calling Stevens's dissent in the case "one of his weakest efforts"—perhaps exceeded only by "the weakness of his intellectual thought" revealed in *Five Chiefs* and his related public appearances.

Epstein does concede that, "as a constitutional matter, Justice Stevens has the perfect right to speak his mind on any issue that strikes his fancy." About that much, at least, they can agree.—*Jason Kelly*



From kitchens around the world, Shockey brought back recipes and stories.

MEMOIR

Well done

Lauren Shockey burned out on restaurant life, but not before a global exploration of cuisines.

In the fall of 2009, **Lauren Shockey** was more than halfway through her year of apprenticing in four high-end restaurants. She was at her third stop, living in Tel Aviv, Israel, chopping herbs and cleaning grouper at Daniel Zach's Carmella Bistro. She had come a long way from her first *stage* (pronounced "stazj")—essentially, an unpaid internship—at New York City's wd-50, chef Wylie Dufresne's molecular-gastronomy restaurant. There she'd been called out for bad knife form while chopping millimeter-wide cubes of lemon confit and stared down by Dufresne as she clumsily tried to swoosh parsley sauce onto a plate. At Carmella she had earned a post running the appetizer station from 3:00 to 11:30 p.m.

But by then Shockey, AB'06, author of *Four Kitchens: My Life Behind the Burner in New York, Hanoi, Tel Aviv, and Paris* (Grand Central Publishing, 2011), wasn't sure that working in a hot, crowded, hierarchical restaurant was her calling. Even if she eventually got a kitchen job, working 12-plus-hour days, the starting pay seemed disproportionate to the physical labor.

At Carmella, she'd proven herself as a solid prep cook, but the mostly male chefs patronized her. Weeks into her time there, a cook lectured her about filling the containers of ingredients up to "the very top." "I refrained from saying, 'Look, buddy, I'm not getting paid, but I know that all the containers need to be filled,'" Shockey writes. "I could tell that he thought I was just a silly girl who liked to play around in the kitchen."

Even as a teenager, Shockey considered herself a good cook, if an amateur. After Chicago, she attended the French Culinary Institute and then started a master's program in food studies at New York University. But she wanted more of a real-world education. Living off her savings, Shockey applied for stage positions in her hometown of New York City as well as in France; Vietnam, whose food culture she'd fallen in love with in New York; and Israel, because, as a secular Jew, she hoped the experience would "nourish" her, "professionally and spiritually."

In contrast to New York, Paris, and Hanoi, Tel Aviv "is still finding its food culture," she explains. "Looking at the restaurant menus in Tel Aviv, they are a little bit behind the times." At Carmella, for example, dessert options included chocolate cake and tiramisu, and there was a goat cheese and beet salad. "These are all dishes that are good, but in New York, it'd be like, OK, that's 1998." At the same time, Israel has begun to look to farms and

markets to bring native foods, such as pomegranates and figs, to the menu.

After plucking the leaves from pounds of Brussels sprouts at wd-50, shelling kilos of crabs at Paris's Senderens, and working with strong personalities, Shockey learned the behind-the-scenes mechanics of the four kitchens. "Even if culinary school teaches you a million different ways to chop carrots," she writes, "it's not going to matter unless you're chopping the carrots exactly how the restaurant wants their carrots chopped."

She learned what could only be learned in the kitchen: "You have to be quick on your feet, and you have to have eyes in the back of your head, five sets of arms," she says. As part of a team, "if you're responsible for the appetizers, you have to coordinate with people responsible for the entrees" so the meal will be timed perfectly.

The year taught her about diverse cuisines, knowledge she has used as a food writer since returning to New York, where she is a *Village Voice* critic.

And, after slaving over restaurant stoves, she decided she prefers cooking at home, where she can see her friends and family enjoy the food. Her favorite cooking experience from her apprenticeships took place outside a restaurant. In Tel Aviv she prepared dinner for Rosh Hashanah: "I had really great conversations with some of the friends I made," Shockey says. "It was a group of eight of us just talking about the meaning of the holiday."

—Ruth E. Kott, *AM*'07

FILM

Dancing with films

Chicago film scholar Yuri Tsivian's database charts movies' tempo shot by shot.

Filmmakers have always known that shot length matters, says Chicago film scholar **Yuri Tsivian**, that the elapsing time between cuts helps define a film's narrative flow and emotional texture. The camera lingers longer over a kiss

PHOTO COURTESY LAUREN SHOCKEY

CITATIONS



LITTLE HELP FROM THEIR FRIENDS

Chicago researchers found that when lab rats encountered trapped friends, they worked to free them, suggesting that empathy might not be limited to mammals higher up the food chain. Neurobiologist **Peggy Mason** and psychologists **Jean Decety** and **Inbal Ben-Ami Bartal** placed one rat in a small tube that could be opened only from the outside. Once the rats figured out how to rescue the distressed friend, they repeated the action in subsequent trials; and when a restrainer filled with chocolate was placed next to the trapped rat, the free rat saved some of the treat for its friend. When the researchers placed a stuffed rat in the restrainer or left it empty, the rats ignored it, indicating that it was the caged rat's distress triggering an empathetic response. In the study, published in *Science*, the researchers explain that more work is necessary to understand the rats' helping motivation, key to defining it as empathy.

STICK AND CARROT

In a study scheduled for the June 2012 *Journal of Consumer Research*, behavioral scientists **Stacey Finkelstein**, PhD¹¹, MBA¹¹, and **Ayelet Fishbach** found that experts thrive on negative criticism while novices respond to positive feedback. In one study, beginning French students made more improvement when praised for accomplishments; students in an advanced French class, however, sought out criticism to improve. The research also showed that beauty-product consumers who consider themselves experts are more likely to be open to negative criticism in advertisements, suggesting that marketers should consider their clientele's skill level.

ABDOMINAL FAT FUELS CANCER

The section of fat that covers the stomach and intestines contains nutrients that accelerate the growth of ovarian cancer, according to an October report published online in *Nature Medicine*. Led by **Ernst Lengyel**, UChicago professor of obstetrics and gynecology, a University-based research team found that by the time cancer was diagnosed, the infected cells had already reached the area—called the omentum—in 80 percent of women. Once there, the cancer

cells adjust their metabolism to feed off of lipids from fat cells. The cancer in the omentum often grows faster than the original ovarian cancer does. For potential treatment, researchers are looking at a fat carrier called fatty acid binding protein (FABP₄). When they inhibited FABP₄, fewer nutrients transferred to cancer cells, and tumor growth slowed.

IDENTIFYING CHARACTERISTIC

Young white children associate language with identity more strongly than with race, UChicago researchers say in the November *Developmental Science*. **Katherine Kinzler**, lead author and Neubauer Family assistant professor in psychology, and **Jocelyn Dautel**, a psychology graduate

student, showed children images of a white child, paired with sounds of him speaking English, followed by images of a white man who spoke French and an African American man who spoke English. The researchers asked the children which adult they thought the boy would grow up to be. Groups of nine- and ten-year-old white children, and five- and six-year-old African American children, chose the race match, while five- and six-year-old white children, chose the language match. Kinzler and Dautel explained that older children have figured out that race is stable, but language can be learned, and African American children are more likely to be aware of race as a meaningful social category.

—Christina Pillsbury, '13



Some children identify others by language first, then race.

than over gunfire. In an on-screen argument, the tension heightens in part because of the staccato shifts from one character's face to another and back again. Cutaways abound during car chases, not so much during a stroll in the park.

Film scholars, too, have long understood the importance of shot lengths. Besides pinpointing a moment in the narrative, "the cutting rate"—the frequency and speed with which the shots change in a film—"says many things," notes Tsivian, a professor in the University's departments of art history, Slavic languages and literatures, comparative literatures, and cinema and media studies.

But scholars have had little hard data

because there hasn't been a widespread mechanism to quantify "how a film changes tempo within itself," Tsivian says, and compare those numbers across genres, eras, cultures. He is trying to build one. In 2005 he developed Cinemetrics, an online database to which film scholars, historians, and students around the world submit shot-length data on thousands of films. Contributors download a software program and then, while watching a film, they record each cut by clicking a mouse or the spacebar when the shot changes. The software maps that mouse-click data into a graph that resembles a lopsided seismograph chart, showing the length of every shot. Trend lines show the fluctuations where a film speeds up

and slows down. To date, Tsivian says, people have made nearly 9,000 submissions to Cinemetrics; some are whole films, others only specific scenes, and some are duplicates. There are five versions of *My Fair Lady* on the database, for example, and a search for *Psycho* brings up 44 results, including a few of the famous shower scene by itself. Versions may vary slightly with human error, but the longer the film, the less those differences matter, Tsivian says.

"We're still just beginning," Tsivian says, but the Cinemetrics data has already confirmed some scholarly hypotheses formulated in the absence of hard numbers. For instance, film historians have long held that the advent of sound in the late 1920s slowed cutting

History retreating

Teaching African American students, a Chicago scholar says, means asking tough questions.

For Chicago historian **Adam Green**, AB'85, the history of black education, and the triumphs and struggles of African American students, is personal. His father, Ernest Green, was one of the Little Rock Nine, who, with the help of federal troops and President Dwight Eisenhower, integrated Little Rock Central High School in 1957. "In many ways," says Green, "the history of African American education is the history of African Americans."

An associate professor of history who specializes in urban and African American history and comparative racial politics, Green spoke at a November symposium organized by the University's Urban Teacher Education Program (UTEP). Before an audience of about 55 people, among them UTEP students preparing to teach in Chicago Public Schools, he discussed some of the complexities of African American education: the lingering legacy of segregation, the persistent lag in black students' academic achievement, the social and economic inequalities that often find their way into the classroom.

Understanding today's problems requires a look back, Green said. In 1865 freed slaves were hungry for education. Recalling a conversation with Lerone Bennett, former executive editor of *Ebony*, Green said, "All across the South, African Americans wanted to be educated more than anything else." Evidence abounds in Booker T. Washington's autobiography *Up From Slavery* and chronicles from 19th-century school teachers. As Bennett told Green, the cry from African Americans was, "Books! Books! Give us books!"

Today much of that hunger has been lost. "Now it's hard to go places and see large numbers of black children or black adults saying, 'Give us learning,'" Green said. In part, he argued, that's because "I'm not sure that we always collectively

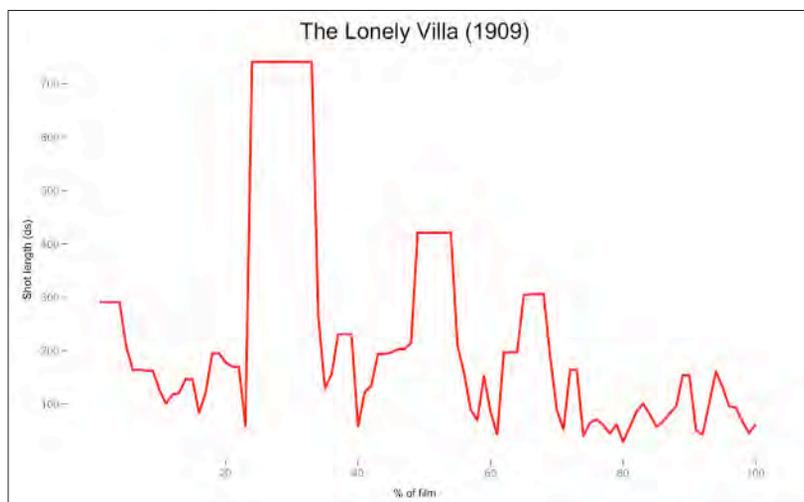
rates all over the world. In the 1910s a Hollywood trend toward assembly-line efficiency, Tsivian says, shortened shot lengths, which made films move faster. After the 1917 Russian revolution, Soviet directors—looking to prove their new country's efficiency and modernism—borrowed the fashion for speed. For ten years, their films had the fastest cutting rates in the world. Then in the late 1920s talkies appeared. "And cutting slowed down everywhere," Tsivian says. "To speak is a different thing than to show. To show is click-click-click. But if someone is actually speaking, the very semiotics of speech takes time." Sound required more precise editing, which was more difficult and time consuming. "So they tried in the beginning not to cut as much as they did in the silent period," Tsivian says. As editing technology improved, cutting rates rose again. "With the data," he says, "you can watch it happen."

Now Tsivian is using Cinemetrics to study tempo changes in a subset of D. W. Griffith movies called "rescue films," which the director pioneered in the early 1900s. "It goes like this: the wife is in danger, and the husband is chasing to save her." Others experimented with this narrative, Tsivian says, but Griffith invented what are now called suspense sequences. "It was Griffith who understood that we really need not see the husband all the time, that parallel editing will only increase the suspense of the film. So you show the husband at one point, and then the wife in danger, and then the burglars who are breaking

into the house." Intercutting three lines of action requires faster cutting, he says, "and this fastness adds to the interest of the chase. It is important to cut away at a point of maximum danger for the wife. We want to know how fast the husband is moving."

Overlaying data for multiple Griffith rescue films, which he submitted to Cinemetrics himself, Tsivian hopes to glean a pattern for how Griffith varied the tempo within them. "We want to see how the cutting tape tempo changes as the abduction or attack happens, the husband learns of it, the husband grabs a taxi or steals a car, and rushes to the rescue."

Studies like this one are the future of Cinemetrics, Tsivian says. But it will require adjustments. The database is growing rapidly, but its submissions are not standardized; human error remains a factor. **Keith Brisson**, AB'09, a Humanities Division database programmer who helps Cinemetrics, says the next step is to comb the "chaos" out of the data, to make it more reliable and widely usable. Tsivian and Brisson may also add a feature that generates cutting-rate data automatically. But "I will never say let's eliminate the manual tool," Tsivian says, "because after you have clicked through a movie, and you have made 600 clicks, you almost feel this movie is in your finger. You know its rhythm. If you watch a movie, you don't notice cuts. If you register cuts, you have a visceral feeling of it. It's like watching a film and then dancing a film. I always want to be able to dance the film."—*Lydia Lyle Gibson*



Cinemetrics data shows how shot lengths fluctuate in a Griffith rescue film.



The legacy of segregation has left a mark on African American education.

believe that the work we're trying to do as teachers is in service of a higher purpose. We have to find a way to bring that into our work, because without it, all you're trying to do is compel people to realize a set of institutional goals."

He added that anyone preparing to teach should come to terms with the history of black education in America: segregation, inequality. "We have to be honest, but not sensational," he said, "about the deficits that we encounter, in terms of students' experience, environments, the worlds that students come from." One problem, he said, is that often education is defined as a discrete activity "independent of environmental and contextual conditions." He thinks it should be a more holistic project, urging teachers to impart a "sense of what it means to encounter a love of books as something that not only educates you, prepares you for a career, gives you an escape, but *makes you well*." Historically, he said, "that's one of the reasons

African Americans invested so deeply in education: because it was something that could make them well."

During the Q&A, one woman questioned the single-minded push toward college—a process that often begins as early as preschool. Green agreed that although "it's hard to imagine education reaching its full and appropriate culmination" without the prospect of college, there are different ways to envision college—community colleges, professional programs, trade schools. A better way to judge secondary education's success, he added, is not by how many students it pushes into higher education but by how many finish, and what they do while they're there.

Green offered this final thought: although there is a paradox in encouraging black students' participation in a system that for many years was systematically unfair, educators still must "commit ourselves to the struggle."

—Megan E. Doherty, AM'05, PhD'10

WILLIAM RAINEY HARPER'S INDEX TEACHERS FOR AMERICA

UChicago's 2011 national ranking, among schools with fewer than 10,000 undergrads, in Teach for America participation:

17th

Students who joined Teach for America in 2011:

24

UChicago graduates who have served during the program's 20-year history:

240

Total applicants in 2011:

48,000

Positions available:

5,280

Years that Teach for America participants agree to spend in underserved schools:

2

Salary range:

30-51K

FOR THE RECORD



PROVEN INNOCENT

The Law School's Exoneration Project has helped free one of five men wrongfully convicted in the 1991 rape and murder of a 14-year-old girl. James Harden, 16 at the time, left an Illinois prison on November 3 after DNA evidence tied the crime to a serial rapist. **Tara Thompson**, JD'03, a Law School lecturer and Exoneration Project staff attorney, led a group of students who traced the DNA sample taken from the victim to convicted rapist Willie Randolph.



THE GIFT OF ECONOMIC RESEARCH

Andrew and Betsy Rosenfield made a \$25 million gift to the University in November, supporting the Law School's Institute for Law and Economics, the Becker Friedman Institute, and research using Chicago Price Theory and economic field studies. **Andrew Rosenfield**, JD'78, a University trustee and a Law School senior lecturer, came to Chicago to study economics in addition to law. As a second-year law student, he cofounded the consulting firm Lexecon Inc., serving as chief executive for more than 20 years.

ICONIC ECONOMISTS CONNECT

A new Chicago Booth website aims to create "the world's best economics department" through a forum for scholars to participate in public-policy

debates. On the Economic Experts Panel at the Initiative on Global Markets website (igmchicago.org), 40 senior professors from elite US universities respond to a weekly question on topics such as the exchange rate of Chinese currency, the effect of vouchers on public education, and the impact of increasing the top marginal income-tax rate.

DIVERSE ACHIEVEMENTS

Shayne Evans, director of the University of Chicago Charter School, and **Sylvia Puente**, AM'90, who leads the Latino Policy Forum, have received the University's 2012 Diversity Leadership Awards. Urban Education Institute director **Timothy Knowles** calls Evans "relentless in terms of his expectations" on students. Puente "saw a need in society and created projects and entire organizations to address the void," says **Susan Gzesh**, director of the University's Human Rights Program.

UNITED FOR CHINNIAH

Nim Chinniah, vice president for administration and CFO, has been named one of 44 Business Leaders of Color by the advocacy organization Chicago United. Joining UChicago in 2007, Chinniah oversees more than 950 staff members in several departments and serves on the University's Diversity Leadership Council.



RAJAN'S RESEARCH REWARDED

Raghuram Rajan, the Eric J. Gleacher distinguished service professor of finance at the business school, was named the winner of India's \$100,000 Infosys Prize in Economics and Social Sciences in November.

Recognized for his research on financial development's role in economic growth and the potentially harmful effects of incentives that lead to excessive risk taking, Rajan is the author of *Fault Lines: How Hidden Fractures Still Threaten the World Economy* (Princeton University Press, 2010).



MUSIC TO THEIR EARS

Court Theatre received two Joseph Jefferson Awards for *Porgy and Bess* at a November 7 ceremony honoring the best Chicago productions. Artistic Director **Charles Newell** won Best Director of a Musical, and longtime Court collaborator Doug Peck won for Best Music Direction.



THE STORY OF IRA GLASS'S LIFE

Ira Glass, host of the radio program *This American Life*, offered advice to 100 creative-writing undergrads during a two-hour campus workshop in October. Glass told the students that storytelling is "not about emotion, primarily. It's about the motion of action—this thing happened, which led to this thing." Creating narrative suspense, he added, makes a story irresistible.

HISTORIC HONOR FOR RICHARDS

Robert J. Richards, PhD'78, the Morris Fishbein distinguished service professor of the history of science and medicine, has received the History of

Science Society's highest honor, the Sarton Medal for Lifetime Achievement. A 2004 Guggenheim Fellow, Richards most recently wrote *The Tragic Sense of Life: Ernst Haeckel and the Struggle over Evolutionary Thought*, which received the 2011 Gordon J. Laing Prize from the University of Chicago Press.

ZIMMER JOINS SCIENCE BOARD

President **Robert J. Zimmer** was sworn in December 13 for a six-year term on the National Science Board. Nominated by President Obama and confirmed by the Senate, Zimmer joins the organization that provides funding for about 20 percent of federally supported academic research.



ONWARD TO OXFORD

Fourth-year **Leah Rand** has received a Marshall Scholarship to study medical ethics at the University of Oxford. A research assistant to professor of pediatrics **William Meadow** on a medical-ethics study—and the 2012 Scavenger Hunt head judge—Rand is majoring in HIPS (History, Philosophy, and Social Studies of Science and Medicine) with a minor in art history.

COURTING DEVELOPMENT

A November 16 ceremony marked the beginning of construction on a 3.3-acre Harper Court development. President Zimmer joined **Andrew Mooney**, AM'77, the city's commissioner of housing and economic development, and Alderman **Will Burns**, AB'95, AM'98, to kick off the 53rd Street project. To be completed in 2013, Harper Court will include a 150,000-square-foot office tower, a three-story retail building, and a Hyatt Place Hotel.

Finding her fate

Hannah Pittard turns suburban childhoods into haunting fiction.

As a high-school student at Deerfield Academy, a Massachusetts boarding school, **Hannah Pittard**, AB'01, racked up awards for creative writing. After coming to UChicago, Pittard focused on literary criticism, but the impulse to write fiction remained. She brought her grandfather's Underwood typewriter to campus, on which she drafted and redrafted letters to high-school friends and a then boyfriend living in Thailand.

"I've reread these letters," says Pittard, "and half of them were complete fiction." One describes a Hyde Park tree that was alive with angry, squawking leaves—an imaginative take on the small black birds that would perch on the branches of a particular tree during winter.

Ten years later, Pittard still finds herself obsessed with all sorts of real-world scenarios—and she still turns those ruminations into fiction. Her debut novel, *The Fates Will Find Their Way*, published by Ecco last January, explores regret and aching nostalgia for suburban childhood. The book debuted to critical praise; *Chicago* magazine named it a top four novel of 2011, and the *Washington Post*'s Ron Charles called it "chilling and touching."

A native of Canton, Georgia, Pittard earned her degree a quarter early and moved back to her home state, where she worked as a reporter for the Savannah College of Art and Design's newspaper. Completing her weekly quota of articles about faculty and alumni artwork and campus events never took long, so she spent her remaining hours in the office writing a manuscript that she calls a "terrible novel-type thing about a girl just like me, only it was third person."

At first, the manuscript mirrored events in Pittard's own life, until she began including chapters of com-



Even the college letters Pittard wrote to friends mixed fiction and reality.

pletely fictional short stories set on Maryland's Eastern Shore, where Pittard's mother and stepfather eventually moved. She noticed the disparity in wealth there: "sprawling farms, old-school money, side by side with poverty that didn't make sense." The stories were written by the novel's protagonist, who was actually Pittard. "The girl who was writing the book, who was me, she was also a writer in the book, so in the book she wrote short stories, and one of the short stories that she wrote—which I wrote for her—I hope readers can see that I know how I sound, that it's ridiculous—ended up being the first short story I ever had published," she says with a laugh. That piece, about a group of misfits, appeared in *McSweeney's*.

Pittard enrolled at the University of Virginia's MFA program in 2004, and while there she won *McSweeney's* Amanda Davis Highwire Fiction Award. After UVA, she waited tables at the Downtown Grille in Charlottesville and wrote a novel about a man whose wife had left him, eventually placing the manuscript with an agent. "I really thought that all it had to do was be on the market and it would sell. I would have taken anything. And it didn't."

The agent took the novel off the market and told Pittard she wasn't interested in her new effort, *The Fates Will Find Their Way*. Deflated, Pittard spent the next six months barely writing, until she decided to channel

that despondent mood into finishing *The Fates*.

The novel opens with the disappearance of 16-year-old Nora Lindell from her suburban town on Halloween. The news spreads via phone tree, and the neighborhood boys trade stories on where they saw her last: at the mall, at the riverbank, at the bus station getting into the passenger side of a beat-up Catalina.

The Fates, says Pittard, is not about a missing girl. "It's about these boys." Narrated in the first person plural, the novel moves back and forth in time, the male protagonists remaining obsessed with Nora years after her unsolved disappearance, even as they reach middle age. They concoct tales about her whereabouts—she's living in Arizona with a Mexican cook and twin daughters; she's fled to Mumbai and taken a lesbian lover—all while sleepwalking through their own adult lives. Clinging to childhood as they cling to Nora, the characters look back and think, "Well, I guess that was my life," says Pittard.

To write the male characters, Pittard drew on men she knew who looked back to high school as the best time of their lives. "Part of what makes life precious is that it is short, that it will end," she says, "so this idea of looking back and being maudlin about a time that can never be recaptured was very depressing to me, but it was also fascinating to me." She doesn't imply that wistful remember-

ing is limited to men, but male conversations she'd overheard compelled her to write in a collective male voice: "If my Dad was in a room with ten men and only five of them had gone on a hunting trip to Canada, it would be, 'Hey, remember when we did this?' And they'd all sort of nod even if they weren't there."

Pittard finished the manuscript in September 2009 and signed with an agent in early October; Ecco landed the deal at auction. She moved back to Chicago in 2010 to become a visiting assistant professor of fiction at DePaul University, and is working on a new novel she describes as an intimate look at a family of four people.

Meanwhile, *The Fates* is still garnering positive critical reaction. Although Pittard is excited by the response, she also gets a kick out of feedback from those who know her well: "One of my good friends from Deerfield said, 'Hannah, I don't like these characters at all. They remind me of the men we went to school with.' And I thought, 'Yes, that's it—only they're mine; I have soft spot for them all.'"

—Katherine Muhlenkamp

SOCIOLOGY

Injurious behavior

Deviance researchers Patricia and Peter Adler study the social side of self-injury.

Sociologists **Peter** and **Patricia "Patti" Adler**, both AM'74, didn't write the book on deviance, but they did edit the standard text: *Constructions of Deviance: Social Power, Context, and Interaction* (Wadsworth Publishing Company), now in its seventh edition. By virtue of their chosen field of study, examining behaviors such as crime, drug use, and eating disorders, they tend to hear from a lot of students with stories of their own deviant behavior. "We come off as very nonjudgmental adults about behaviors that others disdain, ostracize, or reject," says Peter, a University of Denver professor. "In other words, we are sympathetic ears."

For their most recent book, *The Tender Cut: Inside the Hidden World of Self-Injury* (New York University Press, 2011), he and Patti, a University of Colorado at Boulder sociologist, focused on one such set of stories: self-injury. The act of deliberately harming oneself without suicidal intent, self-injury—which can include cutting, burning, branding, skin picking, breaking bones, or severely biting cuticles or nails—first came to their attention in 1982, when a student told Peter about her self-mutilation. Says Peter, "I had never heard of anyone doing anything like this before."

Others came to the Adlers with similar confessions. In the late 1990s a high-school student, given the pseudonym "Janice" in *The Tender Cut*, admitted to Peter that she cut herself. She was failing physical education because she had stopped going to gym class. "She would have to be in shorts," he says. "Her cuttings were on her legs, and she was embarrassed and afraid of being outed." By then the phenomenon had received public attention through movies and articles such as a 1997 *New York Times Magazine* cover story. Janice "was a

VOICE YOUR DREAMS



Students, faculty, staff, and community members contributed to a campus Dream Wall in November with sentiments, such as "make college accessible to *all* in USA," to be displayed at the University's January 12 MLK Celebration.

PHOTO BY JASON SMITH



Self-injury, say the Adlers, is a nonsuicidal act.

fairly straight girl who did not generally attend the usual drinking and drug parties that most of her peers were attending. Why, then, would a seemingly normal girl, with so much ahead of her, levelheaded in other parts of her life, turn to this form of coping?"

A topic then limited to psychologists and psychiatrists, self-injury seemed like a rich research subject. Peter mentioned cutting to his classes at Denver, and Patti to her classes in Boulder. "Students in droves began to write to us, wanted to talk to us, and eventually wanted to be interviewed," Peter says. "By 2000 we knew that we wanted to make a systematic study of this and talk to a wider spectrum of people."

An account of the first sociological longitudinal study of self-injurers living in their natural worlds, *The Tender Cut* traces how subjects evolved over time and how they learned to resolve their dilemmas. For eight years the Adlers gathered more than 135 life histories of people who harmed themselves. They announced their project in class and on the radio, finding volunteers who hurt themselves in private as well as those who had formed a self-injury subculture. "When we hit the Internet," Patti says, "we hit the mother lode."

Some people injured themselves as a coping mechanism, as a form of "self-therapy." Some adolescents and adults enjoyed it, while others wished they could stop. Cutting was the most popular method among their subjects, with burning coming in second. Some people—mostly before the mid-1990s—

discovered self-injury on their own; others heard about it from friends or on the Internet.

Within the world of self-injury, the Adlers learned, there are norms of how people behave. Men don't try to hide their injuries, for example, as opposed to women, who often cut on their inner arms or upper thighs. "Women are socialized to turn emotional anguish inward," Patti says. By cutting or burning themselves, they're "seeking control over their body in the same way as eating disorders." Men, on the other hand, "are defined as manly and tough," the Adlers write, when they flaunt their cutting or burning.

Because of the sensitive nature of the research, the Adlers' face-to-face interviews were not easy. The "difficult thing was not listening to what they did to themselves," says Patti, "but it was the emotional pain they had gone through in their lives."

Janice, the leg cutter, talked with the Adlers when she was 22 about the first time she cut herself. At age 15 she had been raped, and about four months later, after a bad day at school and a huge fight with her family, she accidentally cut her legs while shaving in the bath. "It made me feel a lot better and gave me something else to focus on," Janice says in the book. "For some reason, if you're that upset, seeing that you're physically hurt, seeing blood in the water, or whatever, made me feel a lot better."

Janice continued to cut herself throughout high school and the "tough, adjustment years of college," Peter

says. "Then it began to wane in her early 20s." Now, he says, she has a thriving law practice, is married with a baby son, and does not cut any more.

"We saw people managing self-injury or people who quit without going into a clinic or the hospital," Patti says. They saw subjects' "careers and interactions—so much more that [psychologists] never saw" because the psychological model of self-injury ignores the cultural and social forces surrounding the practice.

"The social meaning of self-injury has completely changed" since it entered the public consciousness in the mid-1990s, as communities both virtual and actual formed around self-injury, Patti says. "Something that people thought was a suicidal gesture" came to be recognized as "an expression of emotional angst and a way of expressing rebellion or disaffection. Emotional pain is a constant. Nobody does this who's not feeling bad."—*Ruth E. Kott, AM '07*

BUSINESS

A taste for beer

Pat Conway's fresh approach to craft brewing brings a European sensibility to Cleveland.

Before he could start crafting "big, lusty, full-bodied beers" with Cleveland-centric names like Edmund Fitzgerald Porter and Burning River Pale Ale, **Pat Conway**, AM '78, had to dig up a few ghosts.

It was the late 1970s, when Americans' beer preferences tended toward Budweiser and more Budweiser. Conway, who bartended at Jim Sheedy's on Chicago's North Side while a social-sciences graduate student at the University, had an inkling that tastes were changing. The traders who patronized the place were drinking imported beers.

Still, American beers had the edge on freshness. "The Germans call beer 'liquid bread,'" says Conway, the co-founder of Cleveland's Great Lakes Brewing Company. "The fresher you drink it, the better it is."

Although Conway wrote his master's thesis on Karl Jung and Thomas Merton, beer was never far from his mind. "To employ some of Jung's terms," he says, "you would say that the craft movement is actually the supple, creative, he would say feminine, side of the brewing industry, and the Budweisers are the very rational, didactic, boring, stale, unimaginative side of brewing."

He'd learned to distinguish his porters from his stouts during an undergraduate year in Rome. While there, he traveled to Munich and Belgium, spending time in *bierstube* and public houses. He got the travel itch again during his last year at Chicago. "I submitted my thesis, then left that afternoon with two friends, and we rode a Jeep to Alaska." In Kodiak, they sold the Jeep to a fisherman and spent a year hopscotching around the world.

Upon his return, Conway took a job as a caseworker at the Circuit Court of Cook County, then as a history and social-studies teacher at Holy Trinity High School in Chicago's West Town neighborhood. Meanwhile, he was thinking about starting a small brewery specializing in craft beers distributed close to home. In 1986 he and his school-teacher wife, Jean, moved to Cleveland, where Conway had family and the overhead for new businesses was lower.

His brother, Dan, a bank loan officer, offered to help with his business plan. They launched their operation in 1988 in a boarded-up building on a run-down street that even the owner didn't see fit to rent. But Pat saw "a neighborhood of red-brick buildings that conjured the romance of brewing days past." A century earlier, nearly 30 breweries had called Cleveland home, some on these very blocks. Now there were none.

Finding a brewer and equipment proved tougher. The city's last brewery, Schmidt's, fermented its farewell batch of hops in 1984. Its final brewer, Thaine Johnson, had retired to the suburbs. Conway tracked him down and talked him into signing on as a consultant.

During the six months it took to build equipment up to Johnson's standards, Conway immersed himself in the Western Reserve Historical Society's archives, researching Cleveland's brewing history, details of which turn up in the décor of the brewpub's three vintage buildings. An old concrete sign



Conway names Great Lakes beers with a nod to Cleveland's history.

from the Cleveland brewery Schlater's rests against one wall, salvaged from a nearby construction site; another sepia-tinted display includes a Victorian calendar from McClean's Feed and Seed Company, which once occupied the beer garden's space. And Conway likes to tell the story of how Eliot Ness, PhB'25, used to sit and drink at the taproom's tiger mahogany bar, when it was the Market Tavern and Ness was Cleveland's embattled safety director.

From the beginning, Great Lakes brewed beer the European way, with malted barley instead of corn and rice. Accolades came quickly. The company's inaugural beer, the Heisman Dortmund—named after super-athlete John Heisman, who grew up in the neighborhood and whose father was a "cooper," or beer barrel maker—won a gold medal at the 1990 Great American Brew Festival. (They changed the name to Dortmund Gold after the Heisman Trophy folks threatened a lawsuit.) Next came Eliot Ness Amber, and then over the years Burning River Pale Ale, Commodore Perry Indian Pale Ale, Holy Moses White Ale, and dozens more.

Their first year, the Conways produced about 1,000 barrels of beer, hand bottling 30 cases a day, and delivered to beer and wine shops and restaurants out of the trunks of their cars. They grew organically, casting their net to nearby cities, and in 1992 they expanded their operations to a neighboring building.

A decade later, Great Lakes takes up six buildings in Cleveland's Ohio City neighborhood and employs 160 people. Each year the brewery produces 100,000 barrels of microbrews on German equipment that puts out ten cases a minute. It's the 22rd largest microbrewery in the country, a size that Conway's content with for now. "A lot of breweries our size sell to every state in the union," he says. "We want to sell only in the vicinity of the brewery, so we're primarily in the Great Lakes region, and all our beers are dated: 'Please drink by this date.'"

One of Conway's newest partners is the Oriental Institute; he and OI executive director Steven Camp are developing a line of beers based on early civilizations. They plan to make not only a Sumerian beer, Conway says, "but maybe a Babylonian beer, maybe a Hittite beer, maybe an Egyptian beer." And going even further, he adds, perhaps also beer from the Middle Ages. "It's still a work in progress, but the brewers are excited."

No recipe exists for, say, ancient Sumerian lager, but Conway has OI pictures of figurines that mourners put in royal tombs, "so they would have breweries in the afterlife," he says. "We know they were brewing beer—you can see the raw materials—but there is no real description of the taste that was involved. It might have been wretched." Or it might have tasted like the Sumerian version of liquid bread.

—Laura Putre

PHOTO COURTESY GREAT LAKES BREWING COMPANY

Man of action

This fall fourth-year Kelvin Ho spent his days not in class but on Occupy Chicago's front lines.

"There's a bunch of senior citizens who want to get arrested today," **Kelvin Ho**, '12, told me at a November 7 rally in Chicago's Federal Plaza. Hundreds of people had gathered that morning outside Senators Dick Durbin's and Mark Kirk's offices to protest Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid cuts. Ho was documenting the rally for Occupy Chicago's live feed.

An Occupy Chicago protestor since the movement came to the city in September, Ho had been involved with a South Side community organization, Southsiders Organized for Unity and Liberation (SOUL), since March 2011. SOUL had been "trying to target for more national issues having to do with bank accountability." Even before Occupy Wall Street picked up steam, he says, "we were already talking about similar issues."

He spoke with the *Magazine* in early November, about two weeks after he and **Paul Kim**, '14, were arrested at a SOUL-organized sit-in affiliated with Occupy Chicago.

—Ruth E. Kott, AM '07

What happened at the sit-in?

I was not intending to get arrested. There was a planned action—there was a Mortgage Bankers Association conference at the Hyatt Regency. Originally 14 of the members had decided to stage an action there, basically a sit-in in the hotel, where we set up sort of a mock living room. The idea is that, when the police come tear it down, it symbolizes the foreclosure process. This is a very diverse group of pastors, students, all sorts of individuals that were part of SOUL.

I was there to record and film the action and also coordinate some other logistics. I guess I started looking suspicious, and one of the security people told me to leave, and I stayed. Apparently once they tell you to leave, and you



don't, it counts as trespassing, so I ended up getting arrested.

How did the police treat you?

A lot of them were very supportive and actually thanked us for what we were doing. There was one incident—one of the people who had participated in the action had chosen to go limp, which basically means [the police] have to carry you out, and, in a sense, that aggravates certain police officers. So one in particular was a little rough with him. No one really wants to carry another guy out.

When did you get involved with Hyde Park community organizations?

Since high school [at an international school in Taiwan], I was very involved in community service. I spent most of my time doing community service rather than in school. But my first few years of college were unsatisfactory. Deep down, I had hoped that when I came to college I'd be able to address many problems that I sort of touched upon back in high school on a larger scale and in a more effective manner. I felt limited, but when I studied abroad in India last autumn, that experience opened my eyes up a lot. One of the larger realizations was that, as one of my professors put it back in India, things are just sanitized here in America. There are many similar problems that occur here, but

they are just sort of institutionalized in ways that might not be as apparent.

What attracted you to Occupy Chicago?

I recognize the serious limitations of various community organizations, and that's what then drew me into the Occupy movement. You have this new form of grassroots movement that has the ability to draw upon people from so many different backgrounds and to reenergize these people in a way such that people finally feel that they have the ability to do something about all the problems that they've been seeing for the past decade.

What are the problems at the heart of the movement?

I think it's no accident that the theme of complete political control by the financial industry or corporate control of our political system has become the core theme. In a sense, that's what underlies the issues of health care, education, housing, and all the various other issues people have been talking about. I think a lot of pundits are saying, "We want a very specific thing that you can pass through Congress," but the reality is the problem is inherent in the system, and several changes need to occur in order to change that. And it's not going to happen with just one magical bill that you can pass through Congress.

ARTS & CULTURE

In India, College students find the artistic roots of a modern nation

BY ELIZABETH STATION

A daily ritual reminds undergraduates in the Civilization Abroad program that they are in India, not Chicago: before class, they slip off their shoes and leave them outside the seminar-room door. It's November, but warm sun filters through gauzy orange curtains, and air-conditioning cools the floor beneath their feet.

Cheerful in a red tunic, **Kaley Mason**, an assistant professor of ethnomusicology, unloads books, a laptop, and a projector from his messenger bag. He has traveled from Chicago to the western city of Pune to teach Art Worlds: Sound, Images, Text—one of three required courses in the quarter-long South Asian Civilization program. Today's class focuses on how India's disparate regions became a nation, a historical process that Mason wants students to understand through the arts. "Let's start with a musical example," he says, playing an audio file of a man singing ardently in Bengali. "Does anyone know that song?"

A woman responds, "It's the Indian national anthem." Exactly, says Mason: it's the first recorded version, made in 1911 by composer and poet Rabindranath Tagore nearly 40 years before India won independence.

"National anthems are one example of how an art world creates a nation—the most obvious way," says Mason. "Can you think of other ways?" Students mention India's flag, visual art, ceremonial copies of the constitution. "Where is the nation performed?" Mason prods. "What is the range of sites?" Sporting

events, suggests a student. Others add presidential debates, television, radio, newspapers, and classrooms.

"Sociologists and anthropologists have argued that it's really media and innovations in technology that enabled what we now call the modern nation-state," says Mason. When radio and television spread through India, "new kinds of communities were possible, and one famous description of what a nation is—what it means to feel you belong to a nation—is an imagined community."

Artists and celebrities play a vital role in "performing the nation" and helping citizens to feel unity, adds Mason. One student cites the Filipina singer Lea Salonga as an example. In and beyond India, the Bollywood actor Shahrukh Khan has sufficient star power to mobilize the masses, says Mason. Such global media icons are "hypermobile," with national and international connections that give their public positions impact: "We could call those people elites; we could also call them cosmopolitans."

The day before the class had watched



The arts can be a medium and catalyst for social transformation.

Balgandharva, a film about a famous male actor who played female roles in an era when women were not allowed to perform on stage. Recalling the film, Mason asks a final question: "How is the nation gendered?" Two-thirds of the 25 students in the Pune program are women, and one has a thoughtful response: "The concept of nation itself—as 'Mother India'—is gendered female, but the power brokers of the nation are gendered male."

Mason agrees: "India itself was imagined as a feminine body. In fact, artists visualized it by superimposing a woman's figure—the figure of a goddess—over the map of India." Yet Indian feminist scholars argue that the modern nation offers mixed blessings for women. Although they have gained access to education, says Mason, it was "a particular kind of education that taught them not to play a prominent role alongside men in the public sphere, but instead channeled them to supporting roles in society."

In India, performing traditions have helped to construct both the private, domestic sphere and a modern, urban public sphere. Mason tells the class about Rija, a woman he met while doing ethnographic research in the state of Kerala. A hereditary musical performer from the Dalit group—the caste once considered untouchable—Rija became a classical music teacher and composer.

"People can use the arts as a medium and catalyst for social transformation," says Mason. He plays a recording of Rija teaching her middle-class grade-school students a patriotic song that she composed. "This, too, is performing the nation."

A female student asks whether Indian girls are taught music partly to increase their appeal on the marriage market. Yes, says Mason. The same is true of dance, a subject that graduate assistant **Rumya Putcha**, AB'03, PhD'11, studied for the dissertation she defended earlier in the fall.

To end the 90-minute class, Mason has students read excerpts from ethnographic sketches they have written about their first "encounters with difference" in India. The class adjourns and students gather outside—still barefoot—to continue the conversation over ginger cookies and fragrant chai.

Later that day, after a Hindi class and leisurely lunch break, Mason and the



After class, students pose with instructors Vidya Dengle (front, center) and Kaley Mason (in red).

students board minivans leaving the Fergusson College neighborhood—the program’s home since 2006—for the University of Pune. The campus’s Centre for Performing Arts, known in Marathi as Lalit Kala Kendra, is sheltered by centuries-old banyan trees.

Vidya Dengle, a classical violinist and visual artist, joins her student, Rama Chobhe, to talk about how music passes orally from guru to disciple (*shishya*) according to Indian tradition (*parampara*). The College students crowd together on a brick-colored rug, facing the two women, who also sit cross-legged. As the room grows hot, a ceiling fan blows minimal relief.

“To become a proper Indian musician, you have to learn through a guru,” explains Dengle, lively and elegant in a sand-colored sari. Music students don’t pay for lessons but instead live and do household chores at a master’s home. “Even [sitar virtuoso] Ravi Shankar had to stay with his guru. This is how you become a performer.”

Dengle explains the *raga*, a basic melodic element of Indian classical music. She sings a few hypnotic examples with Chobhe playing along on violin. An electronic *shruti* box moans a low accompaniment.

The afternoon heat has melted some of the Chicago students against the back wall, but after the lecture they

have questions. When Dengle sings, what do her hand movements mean? Has she ever composed a *raga*? What drives Indian music—is it composition, as with Western classical music, or improvisation, as in jazz?

A combination, she answers: “Our goal is to use improvisation to make music even more interesting and aes-

thetically beautiful.”

After the session, Dengle and the visitors gather outside in the dappled light for a group photo. “That was cool,” says one student as the minivans leave campus. “We should come back here and spend the day.”

Another student sighs in agreement: “I want her to be my guru.” ♦

SYLLABUS

Art Worlds: Sound, Image, Text was second in a three-course sequence that the South Asian Civilization program offered in India last autumn quarter.

Ethnomusicologist Kaley Mason blended seminars with field trips to see performances, films, and visual art. His goal was to approach the interdisciplinary study of South Asia “through the prism of ‘art worlds’ ... from Sanskrit treatises and courtly entertainment to Bollywood glamour and *Indian Idol*.”

Grades came from class participation, two ethnographic sketches, a group project, a midterm quiz, and a short essay. Required texts included *Hinduism: A Very Short Introduction* by Kim Knott (Oxford University Press, 1998); *India and South Asia: A Short History* by David Ludden (Oneworld, 2002); *Music in South India* by T. Viswanathan and Matthew Harp Allen (Oxford University Press, 2004); and *The White Tiger*, a novel by Aravind Adiga (Harper Collins, 2008).

University of Chicago historian **Rochona Majumdar**, PhD’03, taught the program’s kickoff course, *State and Society in India*. Anthropology senior lecturer **Mark Lycett** traveled with students to historic and archaeological sites in Mysore, Goa, Vijayanagara, and beyond for his course on history and place in South Asia. He also directs the program, which launched in Mumbai in winter 2002 and moved to Pune the following autumn.—E.S.



How can we better prepare PhD students for nonacademic careers?

There have long been more doctoral candidates than tenure-track positions available. In the humanities especially, landing an academic job has gotten more difficult. The Modern Language Association and the American Historical Association have reported 30–50 percent drops in English and history positions in recent years. In October AHA president **Anthony Grafton**, AB’71, AM’72, PhD’75, coauthored a Perspectives on History essay arguing that universities must not treat students’ nonacademic career choices as “Plan B.” In an e-mail discussion adapted here, Grafton, the Henry Putnam University professor of history at Princeton, discusses the road forward with **Martha Roth**, dean of Chicago’s Humanities Division and the Chauncey S. Boucher distinguished

service professor of Assyriology; **Andrew Abbott**, AM’75, PhD’82, the Gustavus F. and Ann M. Swift distinguished service professor in sociology and the College; and **Meredith Daw**, director of the University’s Career Advising and Planning Services.

Martha Roth The perception on the part of a large segment of our current young aspiring scholars is that all the hard labor and effort that go into obtaining the highest academic credential in the world, the PhD, might be futile if it does not lead to a tenure-track position in a certain kind of institution. ...

To have “made it” in the academy ... one usually has had some combination of highly honed technical field skills, the instinct to smell out original questions, the ability to communicate compellingly, *sitzfleisch*, and (most important) luck. ... What matters ... is that we recognize [and] encourage that

particular student who might just have the potential to realize that magic combination to begin the journey. ... At the same time we must recognize that not everyone who starts will finish at the same place, and so we need to be sure that we value the journey itself—and also all the possible multiple outcomes.

Andrew Abbott My own policy recommendation is that we should teach to the top of the market. That many of our graduate students don’t end up there is a longstanding fact. We dealt with it in our own youth, and there’s no reason today’s graduate students shouldn’t deal with it in theirs. We should not at all modify our teaching, our aspirations, and our emphases. We are in the business of perpetuating critical scholarship, not of making sure that all of our graduate students have a fulfilling (i.e., elite academic) life trajectory. The latter would be nice, but it is not our first priority.

Anthony Grafton Of course we can’t guarantee students fulfilling lives. But we promise them more than a technical training when they come to us. We promise to do our best to help them find jobs in which their training is an asset. In history, we won’t be doing that until we help students, more systematically and more substantively by far than we do now, to think about and prepare themselves for public history, in its older forms at historical societies and museums and in its newer digital versions, and for many other kinds of jobs as well.

AA The thing we do to prepare people for nonacademic jobs is give them elite academic training—the exact thing we do for everyone. ... In general, the non-profit and private sectors very much value the training our students get in reading, thinking, project management, deferred gratification, etc. ... My department has a long tradition of placing people in the census, not-for-profits, survey houses, and so on. Our students find interdisciplinary centers and collateral schools to work in. The ones who have the urge for market research get jobs in seconds.

Meredith Daw At Career Advising and Planning Services, we have seen

ILLUSTRATION BY JAMES YANG



We need to be sure that we value the journey itself—and also all the possible outcomes.

Martha Roth



We should not at all modify our teaching, our aspirations, and our emphases.

Andrew Abbott



We could go further, by changing our language and culture and by informing ourselves about [other] careers.

Anthony Grafton



Our students feel trapped between expectations inside and outside the academy.

Meredith Darw

an increase in PhD students discussing postacademic careers with us. In 2009–10, 61 percent of PhD students working with CAPS (557 unique PhD students) were interested in exploring careers outside the academy.

I concur that employers are seeking prospective employees who can think analytically, construct an argument, and communicate ideas. However, our students feel trapped between expectations inside and outside the academy. On the postacademic side, they often feel unprepared and out of touch. It is difficult for them to recognize transferable skills, values, and interests that can be applied to employment possibilities. ... Some students are terrified of telling their professors that they are seeking anything less than a tenure-track position at a top-tier research institution. Unfortunately, this also limits their options because students shut themselves off from the people who could lend the most discipline-specific expertise.

It could help if senior faculty at elite institutions would speak in public and in print about the worthiness of student employment pursuits outside of tenure-track positions at elite universities.

AA The reality is that we are about producing the people who will keep knowledge going. It's a precarious trade, and the rest of the world will crush it in a second if given the chance. We cannot afford for an instant to take our eyes off the main prize. Most of our students are not, in fact, going to end up in the graduate-program departments. That doesn't mean that they don't have fine lives. ... There is no reason to develop all kinds of new programs and handshakes, in the departments or elsewhere.

AG I agree with Andy that we have to keep the knowledge machine rolling, and that elite departments should be preparing people to join that machine at the top. ... But I also agree with Meredith. ... The same young people who, as entering students, have the wide interests and the confidence we expect from graduates of good colleges often emerge from the PhD programs I know best with a much narrower sense of their own possibilities.

Over time, history graduate programs have evolved in response to the job market their students face. ... They have recognized that teaching experience plays a big role in placement. ... A good many departments, accordingly, not only have graduate students run sections or teach courses but also offer formal programs to help them develop their pedagogical skills. It's a modest change, but still a substantive one.

A next step would be to think seriously about how to prepare history students for tracks parallel to those that have attracted so many sociology PhDs from Chicago: public history above all, in the government and elsewhere, but also policy think tanks, foundations, and other employers that also form part of the knowledge machine. ...

But I continue to think that we and other humanities fields could go much further, without compromising intellectual demands and standards, in part by changing our language and culture, and in part by informing ourselves about the careers our students have really adopted. ... I don't see why doing this would diminish our commitment to producing the best scholars we can.

MR We are working hard to convey to students, to their teachers and mentors, the reality that a doctorate is the credential that one obtains at the end of a well-defined and finite set of experiences. ... Is someone who holds a PhD in art history and produces three or four art historical monographs in her career any more or less "valuable" than another person with a PhD in art history who leads a civic-renewal program or transforms a family business? My answer is "no."

But, how to convey this convincingly? This leads back to language and culture. Why is it that when a person with an MBA decides to teach elementary school, we say that this is wonderful, noble, and that her MBA training will make her a better elementary teacher? Why don't we have the same sense that PhD training will make her better at whatever she does? I don't mean to imply that this is all about packaging and marketing, about "spin." It is, however, about changing the message. ♦

Through constant experimentation in the Laboratory Schools, the College, and the graduate programs, University of Chicago educators and scholars have tested and spread innovative ideas about how best to teach and to learn.

Even if only to cast scorn, humans are drawn to the new and unknown. We hang around and watch, in case it really is the eve of revolution.

So when John D. Rockefeller, an oil king with dreams of a Baptist university in the Midwest, and William Rainey Harper, a young

Hebrew scholar well on his way to academic celebrity, opened a “bran splinter new” university on a swampy piece of Chicago’s South Side in 1892, the skeptics came to poke around. So did the students.

What they found was indeed a new kind of American university, one that promised opportunities for advanced research with some of the best minds in the country and an undergraduate College where young men and women could continue their education and get a taste of true scholarship. Initially dismissed by Harper’s fellow Baptist educators as wild and unfeasible, his plan for a combined graduate and undergraduate university with courses offered year-round

soon became a model for future institutions.

Harper’s University signaled a shift in American education. In the previous century, serious scholars traveled to Germany to study with leaders in the social, physical, and biological sciences and in the humanities. Most American institutions by contrast were marked by patriarchal professors teaching rote memorization. Harper wanted to infuse the stuffy American lecture hall with the excitement and prestige of the German institution, where professors did important research, held interesting seminars, and ran scientific laboratories. Although Harper’s interest in research meant that in cases of conflict the laboratory won out over the classroom, his early commitment to student dormitories and to an experimental elementary school showed his dedication to a holistic academic experience.

If graduate research was first chair in Harper’s mind, his university model could also thrust undergraduate education to the front of the class. As the 1920s roared to an end, the faculty grew concerned about the academic caliber of the College, prompting Dean Chauncey S. Boucher to develop the University’s first core curriculum. And as enrollment waned and financial woes beset the University in the 1950s and again in the 1970s, several presidents were reminded that the incoming first-years were paying the bills. The efforts to refine and maintain this balance constitute one of the most spirited debates in the University’s history, one that continues today.

university history

DEBATING SOCIETY

The University of Chicago’s focus on the aims and methods of education has led to discussion, experiment, and innovation. Here are a few milestones.

BY MITCHELL KOHLES, ’12



1892
The University's first president, **William Rainey Harper**, snatches faculty from universities across the country and establishes a new model for graduate education. Undergraduates, meanwhile, will divide their years between general study meant to create "men of service" and specialized work in the divisions.

1898
Precursor to the business school, the **College of Commerce and Politics** offers courses on business practices to undergraduates.

1901
The Chicago Institute, a teacher training program led by progressive educator **Francis Parker**, moves to the University.

1901
Sophonisba Breckinridge is Chicago's first woman PhD; in 1904 she becomes the Law School's first female grad. Focused on the "great social issues of the day," she goes on to lead the School of Social Service Administration.

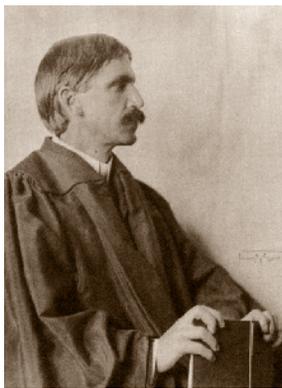


1909
Charles Hubbard Judd becomes director of the School of Education, chair of the Department of Education, and the director of the Lab Schools. Judd, who had been head of the psychology lab at Yale, focuses on educational psychology and testing.

1890

1900

1910



1895
John Dewey heads both the Department of Philosophy and a new Department of Pedagogy, whose aim is "to train competent specialists for the broad and scientific treatment of educational problems."

1896
Dewey opens what's now called the **Laboratory Schools**, in a house on 57th Street with 16 students, crafting his lessons on the child rather than the subject matter. The elementary school is a workshop for observing students and for testing educational methods.

1896
The College's first graduating class includes an African American woman, **Cora Bell Jackson**.

1902
Dewey's high school joins with the Manual Training School and the South Side Academy to become **University High School**. The 500-student school is soon known as the Midwest's best.

1902
The **Law School** opens in the former University Press Building (now the bookstore building). With an annual tuition of \$150, the Law School is the first US institution to grant exclusively a JD (rather than both a JD and an LLB).

1916
William Scott Gray, PhD '13, receives his PhD in education, writing one of the first ever reports on elementary-school reading performance: *Studies of Elementary School Reading through Standardized Tests*. Gray goes on to conduct more research in the Lab Schools, serve as dean of the education school, and later coauthor the Dick and Jane reader series.



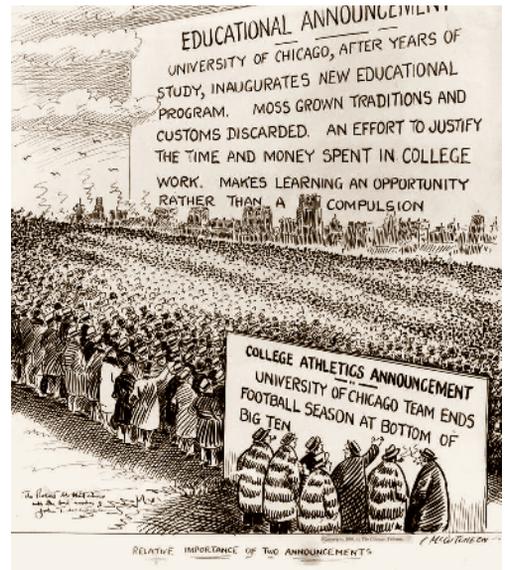
1919
 Lab Schools superintendent **Henry Clinton Morrison** champions teaching in units, with the goal of having a student understand a subject rather than memorize information. In *The Practice of Teaching in the Secondary Schools* (1931), which popularized the unit mastery concept nationwide, he cites a unit example: “How people live in the hot, almost rainless, country along the Nile.”



1929
 Yale Law dean **Robert Maynard Hutchins** (right) is elected president of the University.

1929
 The \$400,000 **Sunny Gymnasium** opens at the Lab Schools, underscoring the importance of physical education for youth.

1939
 President Hutchins eliminates **Big Ten** football, unwilling to sacrifice academic standards to recruit better players.



1920

1930

1923
 The College holds its first **orientation week** for incoming first-years before the autumn quarter to introduce the new students to the neighborhood and the academic community.



1927
 Dedicated on Halloween, Billings Hospital is home to the **University Clinics**, led by Franklin C. McLean, who calls for a full-time staff of teachers and researchers rather than using physicians as part-time instructors.

1930
 Hutchins proposes and the trustees adopt a reorganization that the *Magazine* calls “as significant—in terms of the whole picture of higher education in America—as the very founding of the University.” The structure? The College, four divisions in arts and sciences, and the professional schools. The objectives? “To promote cooperation in research, to coordinate teaching, and to open the way to experiments in general higher education.”

1931
 The experiments begin. Dean of the College **Chauncey S. Boucher** implements the New Plan: two years of gen-ed courses followed by specialized study. Students advance through a “self-pacing system” of comprehensive field examples. Taking the course is optional.

1942
Hutchins and dean of the College **Clarence Faust**, AM'29, PhD'35, launch a heavily prescribed College curriculum, starting after two years of high school and focused almost exclusively on the social sciences and the humanities. High-school graduates who take electives in their chosen division in addition to a reduced general-education curriculum can earn an alternate PhD degree.



1958
Under President **Lawrence A. Kimpton**, a committee proposes a “new College” including two years of general education and two years of specialization. The faculty’s approval signals a compromise between the divisions and the College—and thus between the new plan and the Hutchins College—that brings the two closer together through joint appointments and mutual responsibility of awarding the AB.



1940

1950

1960



1944
The College approves a general **mathematics requirement** and, the next year, a foreign-language requirement.



1959
The new Law School building, designed by Eero Saarinen with the library at its center, opens. **Vice President Richard M. Nixon** gives the dedication address.

1959
The School of Business, which phased out its undergraduate program in 1942, gets renamed the **Graduate School of Business**.

**EDUCATION IS THE
PROCESS BY WHICH WE
BECOME SOMETHING
DIFFERENT FROM WHAT
WE WERE.**

James M. Redfield, AB'54, PhD'61, “Aims of Education,” 1974

PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY SPECIAL COLLECTIONS RESEARCH CENTER



EDUCATION IS NOT MEANT TO BE COMFORTABLE; IT IS MEANT TO PROVOKE, TO STRETCH, TO ENRICH WHILE COMPLICATING.

Hanna H. Gray, Bryn Mawr convocation address, 1997.

1961

Almost three decades after Hutchins closed the School of Education, a new **Graduate School of Education** puts the University back in the business of training teachers.

1962

Christian Mackauer, the William Rainey Harper professor of history in the College, gives incoming first-years the first Aims of Education address, discussing the tensions between general and expert knowledge.

1978

UChicago historian **Hanna H. Gray** becomes the University's president, the first woman president of a major research university.

1978

A national glut of teachers prompts the University to close the **Graduate School of Education**. Remaining faculty and students merge with the Department of Education.

1988

The University's **Center for Urban School Improvement** launches, aiming to contribute to better Chicago public schools.

1988

The University's Office of Technology and Intellectual Property commercializes the **Everyday Mathematics** curriculum developed by Wirszup and the University of Chicago School Mathematics Project.

1970

1980

1966

Provost Edward Levi, U-High'28, PhB'32, JD'35, implements a system of multiple colleges, now the Collegiate Divisions, to prepare the College and the divisions for considerable enrollment growth—a cornerstone of a plan for reinvesting in the University.

1979

UChicago math professor **Izaak Wirszup** presents his National Science Foundation-sponsored report showing the Soviet Union ahead of the United States in math and science education. The report gains national attention and, on the eve of an election year, pushes education reform into the political spotlight.



1984

Common Core becomes official College lingo. The revised curriculum splits a student's course load equally in two: 21 courses of general education and 21 courses of specialized study in a division.

1990

1990
The **Consortium on Chicago School Research** forms, joining together researchers from the University, Chicago Public Schools, and others to study reforms that decentralized the city's schools. The data-guided consortium continues to study CPS reform efforts.



2010
The **Consortium** publishes *Organizing Schools for Improvement* (University of Chicago Press), a study identifying five elements—effective leaders, collaborative teachers, involved families, a supportive environment, and ambitious instruction—essential for successful schools.

1996
The University announces its plan to phase out the Department of Education by 2001, citing inadequate scholarship standards. Provost Richard Saller says the University will “preserve what is most vital in the department,” such as the **Center for Urban School Improvement**.

2003
The **Urban Teacher Education Program** master's-degree program begins, training students to work in Chicago Public Schools.

2005
The interdisciplinary **Committee on Education** opens in the Social Sciences Division, chaired by **Steven Raudenbush**, the Lewis-Sebring distinguished service professor in sociology and the College.

2000

1998
The College faculty revises the **Common Core**, splitting it evenly between general-education requirements, specialized study courses, and electives. Critics complain about fewer Core courses being required.

1998
The Center for Urban School Improvement opens the first University of Chicago Charter School campus, **North Kenwood/Oakland Elementary School**, on East 46th Street to provide quality education for urban families and professional development for teachers.

2008
The University opens the **Urban Education Institute**. It now oversees four charter school campuses, the Consortium on Chicago School Research, the Urban Teacher Education Program, core functions of the Center for Urban School Improvement, and efforts to develop educational tools.

2009
Research by the Consortium prompts officials at the US Department of Education to simplify the **FAFSA** form required for students seeking federal college aid. The revised form allows students to bypass nonapplicable questions and helps parents import their federal tax information.

2010



September 22, 2011
Bernard Harcourt, the Julius Kreger professor of law and chair of the Political Science Department, gives the **Aims of Education address** to the Class of 2015. Harcourt's topic: “Question the Authority of Truth.”



research

EARN AS YOU LEARN

An ambitious economic field experiment studies how financial incentives for students, teachers, and parents affect academic performance.

BY JASON KELLY

ILLUSTRATIONS BY CELYN



On 16th Place in Chicago Heights, an industrial south-suburban town that feels haunted by the ghosts of vanished jobs, a school blends into its worn neighborhood. The tan, brown, and red brick buildings that make up the Washington-McKinley elementary and junior high schools could be the offices of any local business or government agency without the budget to update its facilities. On one wall, though, there's a vibrant contrast: a bright red, blue, yellow, and green apple, the logo for the Griffin Early Childhood Center, an experimental preschool within the school, a field laboratory for education research.

The colorful sign represents a \$10 million grant from the Kenneth and Anne Griffin Foundation for what *Bloomberg Markets Magazine* called "one of the largest field experiments ever conducted in economics." Recruiting 650 families each year, the study tests financial-incentive strategies for improving academic performance.

In a community suffering from economic problems that infect its schools—an unemployment rate above 15 percent and almost 80 percent of students who qualify for free or reduced lunch—the investment offers a two-fold opportunity: research and outreach. Now in its second academic year, the project already has shown benefits for the children involved as the researchers try to identify long-term solutions for schools in other distressed districts like Chicago Heights. "It's a really good representation of the urban education problems we have in the United States," says University of Chicago economist **John List**, who developed the project with Kenneth and Anne Griffin, colleague **Steven Levitt**, and Harvard's Roland Fryer.

Among the attempts to solve education problems, financial incentives for teachers have become more common in recent years. The concept of merit pay has been controversial; opponents argue that home and community factors that affect student performance make it impossible to implement a fair system. Linking teacher bonuses to standardized-test scores has been especially contentious (see, "Failed Tests," page 44).

Motivating students with money has also been on the rise. In 2008 *USA Today* reported that at least a dozen states planned to pay students—most with money from corporate and philanthropic donations—for meeting classwork or test-score standards. Fryer, who at 30 became the youngest African American to receive tenure at Harvard in 2008 and now directs its Education Innovation Laboratory, leads education research projects nationwide. Fryer's experiments have found that paying students not for meeting performance expectations but for fundamental actions

common to academic success—good behavior, regular attendance, homework completion—produces better results.

Two years before they started the Griffin experiment, Chicago economists List and Levitt were involved in another financial-incentive study at a Chicago Heights high school. List, who calls field experiments "my passion," has fanned out around the world to conduct research on sports memorabilia, environmental regulation, and charitable giving. A 2008 *New York Times Magazine* story about his philanthropy research caught the attention of Chicago Heights physician William Payne, who contacted List to discuss ways his expertise could be put to use to help the local community. At about the same time, Chicago hedge-fund manager and philanthropist Kenneth Griffin met with List to discuss ways to examine the effects of education incentives. They set out to study those effects in Chicago Heights.

A Griffin-funded experiment during the 2008–09 school year tested cash incentives for ninth graders. Payne described a major dropout problem, telling List that as many as half of Chicago Heights high-school students failed to graduate, with most leaving between their first and second years. The researchers set out to patch that wound. In one part of the study, called the Chicago Heights Miracle, students who maintained a C average and met attendance and behavioral requirements received \$50 a month. Others qualified for a \$500 end-of-year lottery. Another part of the study focused on parents, tracking the effect of those incentives on mothers and fathers who received the money or a place in the lottery if their children achieved the standards.

**LIST BELIEVES
THAT A KEY FACTOR
IN PROMOTING
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ATTENTION: THE ROLE
OF PARENTS.**



Because of those financial incentives, List estimates the \$400,000 experiment kept about 25–40 potential dropouts on track to earn a diploma this spring. “Per student, that’s pretty expensive,” he says. A scene in the 2010 *Freakonomics* movie shows List and Levitt discussing the results with Chicago graduate student **Sally Sadoff**, AM’08, PhD’10, who wrote her dissertation on the study.

As the researchers analyzed the data, they realized that, although the experiment stopped some bleeding, it did not treat the festering infection. By ninth grade the students were so far behind—reading, on average, at a third-grade level—that it was too late for the incentives to make a meaningful difference. “It’s like asking someone who’s never had a math class to solve a second-order linear partial differential equation and saying, ‘I’ll give you a million dollars if you solve it.’” List says. “They really want to solve it, but they just can’t.”

Eddie Dobrez, executive director of the Griffin Early Childhood Center, loves how the *Freakonomics* scene ends. Rather than letting the results discourage them about whether behavioral economics can influence educational progress, the researchers decide to be more ambitious, recalibrating their hypothesis to focus on much younger children and, of particular interest to List, their parents. “They said, ‘That’d be cool, let’s do that,’” Dobrez says during a tour of the center that grew out of that conversation. “That’s the innovative spirit and the courage it takes to do something like this. That’s why we’re here.”

Here” is a hallway and part of the basement at Washington-McKinley. There are five Griffin Center preschool classrooms in the building, each with 15 students aged 3 to 5, a teacher, and an assistant. The students follow a traditional reading and math curriculum called Literacy Express. At Highlands, another Chicago Heights school, five more Griffin preschool classrooms use a curriculum called Tools of the Mind that focuses on social and emotional skills linked to later academic success: self-confidence, self-control, assertiveness. The idea is to measure, among the 150 students enrolled every year in the tuition-free, all-day preschool, the effect of each method on later academic success.

List believes that a key factor in promoting educational achievement does not receive enough attention: the role of parents. “We have too many eggs in the kid basket,” he told *Bloomberg*. “We need to spend much more time and many more resources on helping parents.”

Families who sign up for the Griffin program are assigned by lottery to one of three tracks—the preschool, a parent academy, or a control group that receives no intervention. The children of the parent-academy group do not attend the Griffin preschool. Instead there are 18 sessions for moms and dads, complete with homework assignments, designed to teach “how to be a good parent in the academic sense,” List says. Parents in the academy receive payments, up to \$7,000 a year, for attending the sessions and complet-

ing assignments. Their sons and daughters, although not in the preschool, also undergo assessments to measure the effects of the parent intervention on their development.

Once the children reach kindergarten, they enter the mainstream Chicago Heights school system. At that point, the researchers no longer set the curriculum, but the monitoring continues and the experiments on financial incentives expand to include students and teachers, in addition to parents. “We have little idea how best to incentivize those components,” List says, “and how those components might act as complements or substitutes.”

Identifying the proper balance requires solving a sort of multiple-choice story problem. To List, basic behavioral-economic questions apply to each facet: “how should I induce effort, and how does that map onto student outcomes?” When **Ron Huberman**, AM’00, MBA’00, ran the Chicago Public Schools in 2009–10, he sought List’s advice: “John, I have \$50 million to spend, and I want to know the best way to spend it to advance student achievement.” List felt embarrassed that he didn’t know—he had been trying to answer exactly that question with the Chicago Heights ninth graders, but he did not have enough data for an informed recommendation.

With the early-childhood project, List has taken an aggressive step toward compiling that data. As Clancy Blair, a New York University applied psychologist who studies cognitive development in young children, told *Bloomberg*, it’s a “crazy idea” of astonishing scope.

On the surface, it looks like a typical preschool: one November morning, a handful of students at Washington-McKinley gather at one end of their classroom wearing plastic fire helmets and reflective vests. Others color and play with blocks, alone or in small groups, while the teacher and an assistant move around to support and supervise.

Both the Tools of the Mind and Literary Express approaches improved overall preschool performance during the study’s first year. Students entered the preschool program at about the 30th percentile among their peers nationwide, based on skills related to the curriculum they would follow. By June, they were in the 55th percentile. “Of our nine-month intervention,” List says, “we moved them about 17 academic months.”

In other early-childhood academic studies, immediate improvement tends to evaporate over time. By the third grade, List says, the kids who benefit from research intervention typically slip back to about the level of the control group.

The Griffin researchers want to find out how much educating (and paying) parents will help prevent that kind of decline. In a cavernous room in the basement of Washington-McKinley, Griffin parent-academy director Ty Jiles displays slides to a group of six mothers and fathers. The group sits in folding chairs arranged in a semicircle, dressed

casually and interacting like friends or colleagues, asking questions and interjecting their own experiences as Jiles delivers the day’s lesson.

She emphasizes topics from the Griffin preschool curriculum, focusing on how parents can help impart those skills to their children, amplifying the bullet points on the screen. Use your child’s interests to connect to learning, she says, such as counting the number of times they throw a ball in a game of catch. Encourage them based on what they already know, rather than directing attention to what they don’t—praise their ability to recognize letters as an inspiration to learn the sounds they make.

At home the parents not only have to put the advice into practice; they also have to record how they handle specific situations. An assignment, due at the next session two weeks later, requires parents to describe an action they wanted their child to master. They’re instructed to watch the child doing the activity alone, determine how they would help based on those observations, and then write about the experience.

The parent academy offers two types of financial incentives. Half the parents receive direct payments. The other half earns deposits into a college fund. “We’re trying to figure out the optimal way to get people to invest in their children,” List says.

Early results show performance improvements above the control group for the children whose parents receive either type of payment, but neither made as much progress as the preschool students. The students whose parents receive the college-fund investments, though, had the best skill-retention rates over the summer among all the groups studied, preschool included.

The research in Chicago Heights will theoretically last forever, monitoring students enrolled as three-year-olds for as long as they live. List hopes that his grad students’ grad students will still be gathering data decades from now. As the Griffin Center’s executive director Dobrez puts it, “The researchers want to understand life outcomes, not just educational outcomes.” They will track the adult subjects’ jobs,

THE RESEARCHERS WANT TO UNDERSTAND LIFE OUTCOMES, NOT JUST EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES.



earnings, and criminal records as closely as they tracked their grades, test scores, attendance, and behavior as students.

At the preschool level, only the parent group receives monetary incentives, but from the time the children enter kindergarten, students and teachers also have a financial stake. In a two-month after-school training program, students spend one hour, four days a week, working on computer-based tests that measure either cognitive or noncognitive skills. Results of individual and team competitions determine who receives weekly awards worth \$7–\$10. The team competitions measure peer effects on student performance.

There is also a “teacher empowerment program,” says Sadoff, the Chicago graduate who’s now an assistant professor of management and strategy at the University of California, San Diego. In the empowerment program, teachers select two students each week and establish the criteria they must meet to earn a reward worth about \$15. The idea, Sadoff says, is to assess whether teachers “can incentivize students more effectively than policy makers can.”

Teachers also receive their own financial rewards in the Chicago Heights experiment. All K–eighth grade math and reading teachers in the school system, along with fourth- and seventh-grade science instructors, were eligible for the study. Those who signed up were randomly assigned into the incentive or control groups.

The incentive group receives bonus pay at the beginning of the year because, List says, the promise of extra money at

the end does not inspire the same effort as an upfront bonus. “People have a really hard time thinking about months into the future, even adults,” he says. “We tend to discount [the value of a later payment] at a rate that’s way too high.”

To test that, two-thirds of the teachers in the Griffin study receive an extra \$4,000 when school starts, an advance they have to repay if their students fail to meet expectations. “We leverage loss aversion and bring the reward to the very front,” List says. “Our teachers do sign contracts, and if their students do not achieve, they give us some or all of the money back.” The early results indicate that prepaid incentives yield student gains five to ten times greater than performance bonuses that are withheld from teachers until the end of the year.

The payoff of the Griffin experiment can seem far off and far reaching. Any immediate effects might be difficult to identify, considering the longevity and complexity of the research—and the depth of the problems it addresses. But Dobrez, who chats with moms and dads as they leave their class session and hugs preschoolers who call her “Miss Edie,” sees the effects on a personal level, in the children’s development and in the parents’ commitment, which the first year’s progress underscored.

“This is to the benefit of these families now,” she says, “and the families can also feel like they’re benefitting future generations” with answers to the complicated—and controversial—questions about whether financial incentives elevate the value of education. ♦

FAILED TESTS

Linking teacher merit pay to standardized-test scores compromises learning and creates incentives to cheat.

BY JASON KELLY

The concept of measuring teacher performance based on student standardized-test scores reminds **Derek Neal** of the 1970s *Saturday Night Live* commercial parody about the household cleaner that's also a dessert topping. "I call this Shimmer floor wax and education policy," he says, summing up what he considers the ridiculous linking of those two metrics, a practice that has become increasingly common in the era of No Child Left Behind.

In October the *Wall Street Journal* reported that 23 states and the District of Columbia use test scores, at least in part, to evaluate teachers. Eleven states use those results to determine tenure. The trend represents a shift away from decades of teacher compensation and job security based on seniority or education level with minimal attention to student performance. The \$4.35 billion federal Race to the Top program instituted in 2009 accelerated the shift, granting funds based on result-oriented teacher evaluations, often focused on test scores.

Neal, a professor in economics and the Committee on Education, insists it's a "logical impossibility" that standardized tests, as they're most often administered, could assess both teachers and students without compromising teacher integrity, student learning, or both. "The idea is that we want faculty held accountable for what students learn, so the tool that we use to measure what students learn is the tool that we should use to hold faculty accountable," Neal says. "It's all rhetorically very pleasing, but it has nothing to do with the economics of how you design incentive systems."

For standardized tests to show a correlation between student scores and teacher performance, they must be comparable from year to year and, therefore, predictable. "Any test that is very predictable will fail the requirement of being well designed for use in an incentives system," Neal says, "because if it's predictable, there will necessarily be

NEAL'S RESEARCH SUGGESTS THAT USING THE SAME TESTS TO MEASURE TEACHER COMPETENCE AND STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT FAILS BOTH OBJECTIVES.

RESULTS
from

A KENTUCKY DISTRICT'S STANDARDIZED MATH TEST



Third-grade test scores steadily improved—until a different company supplied the exams.

a hidden action—which is, find a way to get a copy of the test and have [students] memorize the answers.”

Other types of what he calls “funny business” point to the disproportionate importance placed on testing. A 2005 study reported that Virginia educators increased the sugar content of school meals served on exam days because low glucose levels have been associated with poor scores. Some teachers have gone to the extreme of committing fraud. **Steven Levitt**, the William B. Ogden distinguished service professor of economics, and **Brian A. Jacob**, PhD’01, uncovered evidence that from 1993 to 2000 some Chicago Public Schools teachers changed student answers on standardized tests before submitting them.

Neal’s research suggests that, whether teachers use honest or nefarious methods, using the same test to measure professional competence and student achievement fails both objectives. In a 2011 National Bureau of Economic Research working paper, “The Design of Performance Pay in Education,” he finds that even when test scores improve—as they often do when teachers have a stake in the results—the growth tends to reflect mastery of test-taking techniques as opposed to the subject matter itself. Neal’s paper reviews studies from Kenya, Israel, Portugal, England, and throughout the United States. In that worldwide data, he says, “I see very weak evidence that the movement toward assessment-based accountability has increased real skill levels rather than test-taking skill levels.”

When they’re evaluated on student scores, teachers are motivated to focus on tactics specific to a test. Neal cites a 2002 *Journal of Human Resources* paper by Harvard professor Dan Koretz describing a Kentucky school district’s standardized-test results. Third graders performed at a fourth-grade math level—until the district switched testing companies. “They ordered a test that was supposed to cover the exact same curriculum, but they ordered it from a different company,” Neal said in a 2010 lecture. With a rueful laugh, he added, “Lo and behold, they weren’t as special anymore.”

Over time results on the new test rebounded to the levels achieved on the previous one, but when Koretz gave the first company’s exam to a subset of students who had prepared for the second version, the results dropped again. “The results don’t always turn out this starkly,” Neal says, “but it’s clear there’s a lot of evidence out there that when you put in these high-stakes programs, you get gains that are specific to a type of assessment.”

Despite the nodding heads he sees during presentations to policy audiences, Neal senses little momentum for the wholesale change he considers necessary. He advocates designing tests that do not repeat questions or formats from year to year and limiting multiple-choice problems to avoid spending class time on tactics such as when to guess or ignore questions.

Neal also argues that teachers should not be evaluated as a monolithic whole as if, for example, all the fifth-grade math teachers do the same job. “I think there are a lot of people in the policy community that want to say that’s exactly the case,” he says, “and I think that’s stupid.” Because suburban and inner-city schools—or honors and remedial classes—have students with different backgrounds and skill levels, Neal says that teachers should be judged according to “appropriately defined comparison sets.” Within those comparison sets, salary bonuses can be more fairly distributed. He proposes a “pay for percentile” plan outlined in a 2011 paper written with Gadi Barlevy of the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago. Software that Neal developed and offers for free allows students to be classified according to academic history and demographic factors. How well those students fare within their groups then determines a teacher’s relative performance and merit pay.

To Neal’s frustration, changes of that magnitude seldom enter the public debate. Instead discussion tends to focus on nips and tucks to No Child Left Behind and fine-tuning test design rather than reforming the process to remove the inherent temptations on teachers. “I’m arguing, no,” Neal says, “you’ve got to junk it and start over.” ♦



teaching

PEER GROUPS

Students often continue to collaborate with professors after earning their degrees. Sometimes, as in these four examples, those relationships move beyond collegial to true professional and personal friendships.

This fall Peirce (left) and Berlant led a public discussion on campus about Peirce's films and their relationship.

Lauren Berlant received a call from a reporter asking about **Kimberly Peirce**, cowriter and director of the Academy Award-winning film *Boys Don't Cry* (1999), shortly after the film was released. In several interviews, Peirce, AB'90, had said Berlant, her former feminist-theory professor, was a large part of why she went into film. Being remembered by a former student who went on to make such strides in her field, Berlant says, is "like being Michael Jordan's basketball coach in high school."

While in the College, Peirce had "absolute adoration" for Berlant, the George M. Pullman professor of English language and literature, the Center for the Study of Gender and Sexuality, and the College. Because feminist theory was a rare course subject in the late 1980s, Berlant's class attracted students with no previous exposure to the topic. Now well known for her exploration of gender and sexuality in *Boys Don't Cry*, Peirce says she didn't understand its importance during the class: "Something was bubbling over that was way bigger than I realized at the time."

Peirce's respect for her teacher was not one-sided. Ber-

lant noticed that Peirce was an "astonishing reader of film" who "could see things about storytelling, but also about visual intensity, that I had never seen a student be able to see," Berlant said in an interview before a campus talk the two gave together this past October.

In class, Berlant showed Laura Kipnis's film *Marx: The Video*, in which Kipnis compares eating disorders like anorexia and bulimia with Marx's sexual appetite. Peirce "incited this riot in the class," Berlant recalls, "because [they] were all really tired of women identifying with their eating disorders." Her passion for the subject caught Berlant's eye.

Peirce had an "opinionated and slightly impatient" approach to theory, Berlant says. "But when it came to encountering art, she was astonishing in her eye for detail and narrative insight." When Berlant suggested film school instead of a life of academia, Peirce says, it was "an amazing sense of permission from somebody that had authority and intellect and understood my desire." With that push, she enrolled at Columbia University's film school. Beyond *Boys Don't Cry*, Peirce cowrote and directed the film *Stop-Loss* (2008) as well as a few small projects.

After Peirce gave several press interviews mentioning

PHOTOGRAPH BY JASON SMITH

Berlant, the two reconnected, this time as friends. They talk frequently, often on Facebook, and see each other a few times every year. Their relationship, Peirce says, “runs the gamut; it’s both emotional and friendship, but it’s also really intellectual.” Berlant says they were lucky to stumble upon a situation “where people who saw a strength and a talent in each other at one time had a shot in creating a relationship with one another.”—*Christina Pillsbury, '13*

When School of Social Service Administration professor **Dolores “Dodie” Norton** suggested that her then research coordinator **Karen Freel**, AM’87, PhD’94, should apply for a fellowship to study infant mental health and development, Freel wasn’t so sure. “I said, ‘But Dodie, I don’t know anything about infants,’” Freel remembers. “Dodie said, ‘Well, you’ll learn.’”

Not only did Freel learn about children’s social and emotional health during her 1985–87 fellowship at Zero to Three, a DC-based nonprofit, but she also ended up switching her career path. Freel is now the vice president of research and evaluation for the Chicago-based Ounce of Prevention Fund, which operates programs to help children born into poverty.

Zero to Three—on whose board Norton has sat since 1984—also shifted the career path of another of her students: **Lorraine Kubicek**, AM’80, PhD’92, whom Norton recommended for the 1987–89 fellowship class. Before working with Norton, Chicago’s Samuel Deutsch professor emerita, Kubicek had researched children’s cognitive development, without looking at social-emotional aspects. But infant mental health was always an interest of hers. At Zero to Three, Kubicek says, “I felt like I finally found a home, in terms of my ideas.” Now a clinical faculty member in the University of Colorado Denver’s psychiatry department, Kubicek is also involved with a Colorado infant mental-health organization, as is Freel in Illinois.

As the two women chat about the work they do now, Freel in her Ounce of Prevention office with Norton and



Norton sees Kubicek in DC (top) and Freel in Chicago.

Kubicek on speakerphone from Colorado, the mentor sits back and smiles, inserting a “that’s great,” every now and then. She first met the two in 1982, at the start of her longitudinal research project, *The Children At Risk: The Infant and Child Development Project*, studying children from families and neighborhoods considered high risk for delayed or stunted social and cognitive development from two days after birth to age 20. Kubicek’s role was to videotape the children just after birth in the hospital, and Freel went to their homes to record the same children months and then years afterward.

In Freel’s office, the women reminisce about their work together in the 1980s, laughing about the male student chauffeur—“preppy from the word go”—Norton hired to chaperone Freel as she videotaped families in the Robert Taylor Homes, or remembering the happy moment Kubicek, as Norton’s grad student, told her she was pregnant with her first daughter. Over the years the three have stayed in touch. Although Kubicek moved to Colorado, they see each other every year or two at the Zero to Three annual conference, grabbing dinner together or meeting for different sessions. Freel and Norton continued to collabo-

**I FELT LIKE I
FINALLY FOUND A
HOME, IN TERMS
OF MY IDEAS.**

PHOTOGRAPHY BY HOWARD KORN (TOP) AND JASON SMITH (BOTTOM)



Easterbrook (left) and Posner find each other's vast knowledge helpful in deciding increasingly complicated cases.

rate, including planning a professional-development trip to Chicago for a set of Zero to Three fellows.

They got to know each other personally as well as professionally. "I got to know all about her sons, and I met her sons," Freel says. She and Norton joined a walking group and attend the symphony together.

"It's the same kind of warmth and meshing of personalities and views and interests as any friendship," Norton says. The relationships changed from professional to personal as her students became successful in their own right. "It morphed into just friendship."—*Ruth E. Kott, AM '07*

Judges **Richard Posner** and **Frank Easterbrook**, JD'73, whose careers have followed strikingly similar paths, have at least one divergence: how they interpret the law. Easterbrook bases his rulings on "concrete authority" from legal texts and history, what he calls a "textualist" approach. Posner uses a pragmatic interpretation, preferring "loose standards" such as negligence, he says, "as opposed to a rule that you can't drive more than 50 miles an hour."

In 30 years on the Seventh Circuit US Court of Appeals for Posner and 26 for Chief Judge Easterbrook, they've been so consistent in their opposing interpretations that "we're a running experiment," says Easterbrook. It's no joke: legal scholar Daniel Farber used their rulings as data for a 2000 study on whether statutory interpretations matter. They don't matter much, Farber found. In 800 cases Posner and Easterbrook heard together, the two voted differently only one percent of the time.

In Easterbrook's chambers at Chicago's Dirksen Federal Building this fall, where *Star Wars* and *Star Trek* collectibles, Supreme Court bobblehead dolls, and a large telescope stand out among the legal volumes, he and Posner (by speakerphone) discussed their long-standing relationship.

Posner taught Easterbrook's first-year torts class at the Law School. "He used the class as a test for economic theories," says Easterbrook. Posner was at work on *Economic Analysis of Law* (1973), following up on UChicago Nobelists **Ronald Coase** and **Gary Becker**, AM'53, PhD'55, to solidify law and economics as a field—applying economic theories of efficiency and incentives to law.

Posner recalls being a judge at Easterbrook's first-year moot court argument. "I don't remember students' moot court arguments," Posner says, "but that one I've remembered for the last 40-odd years." The case, *Williams v. Florida* (1970), addressed whether states could use six-person juries in criminal prosecutions. Easterbrook read psychological research about group dynamics, arguing against groups of six because they'd reach more varied results than groups of 12. "He completely blew away his opponent," Posner says, "and it was great."

After law school Easterbrook clerked for a year, as Posner had done a decade earlier after Harvard. Both men then worked in the solicitor general's office and eventually became professors. Joining Chicago's faculty in 1979, Easterbrook worked for a consulting firm Posner had helped to form called Lexecon. Before Posner joined the appellate court, the two collaborated on an antitrust casebook, Easterbrook says, "whose genesis is way back in the class taught

**EASTERBROOK
COMPLETELY BLEW
AWAY HIS OPPONENT,
AND IT WAS GREAT.**

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JASON SMITH

by Edward Levi [U-High'28, PhB'32, JD'35] and Aaron Director, one of the first joinings of law and economics in the classroom."

On the Seventh Circuit, the two discuss current cases and legal issues at lunch, before or after arguments, and at the Law School, where they remain senior lecturers. Easterbrook's "encyclopedic knowledge" of science, the social sciences, financial issues, and legal doctrines and cases, Posner says, "is a special asset" in court, especially as the facts have become so complex in medical and financial cases, for example. Easterbrook appreciates Posner's knowledge—he's written dozens of books—and his critical judgment.

In addition to their judicial interpretations, they differ in their personal styles. Posner's a slight man who speaks softly yet assuredly. Easterbrook's towering stature and precise, booming tone are known to intimidate lawyers. And while Posner contributes frequent academic treatises to the blog he writes with economist Becker, Easterbrook is reticent about pontificating publicly. "I think it's generally better for judges to say as little as possible in public that they haven't had a good long time to think about," he says. Posner counters that he generally doesn't blog about legal issues. It's another point, Easterbrook notes, on which they've agreed to disagree.—*Amy Braverman Puma*

As soon as **Martha Alibali**, AB'86, AM'91, PhD'94, started working in **Susan Goldin-Meadow's** psychology lab as a College student, managing one of her grants, she no longer felt like just an undergraduate; she was a colleague. Around 13 years later her sister, **Susan Wagner Cook**, SB'00, PhD'06, also researched side by side with Goldin-Meadow. The women say Goldin-Meadow, the Beardsley Ruml distinguished service professor in psychology, comparative human development, and the College, mentored them with such enthusiasm that they chose to study gesture, her specialty, in their own careers.

Both Alibali, a psychology professor at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and Cook, at the University of Iowa, say Goldin-Meadow shows respect for students and their ideas. "Susan cares a lot about the people around her. She values contribution at all levels," Cook says. "And when you're the lowest person on the totem pole, that's really important."

Cook, who studies how gesture influences learning and memory, says that if she presented Goldin-Meadow with an idea, credit was paid, "even nine meetings down the road, if something was brought up in a meeting, she would say 'Oh, Susan, that's exactly what you said.'"

For her dedication to her students, this summer Goldin-Meadow received the American Psychological Association's Mentor Award in Developmental Psychology.



Former students recognized Goldin-Meadow's kind gestures by nominating her for an award.

In Alibali's nomination letter, she cited Goldin-Meadow's commitment to encouraging academic independence, teaching students how to think through research methods and how to define important work, and celebrating and promoting her students' research.

Goldin-Meadow strives to cultivate passion in her students, and she pushes them to broaden their audience by presenting research clearly enough that "your grandmother can understand it." During the American Psychological Association symposium, she says, she felt gratified that her former students "did indeed learn these things from being in my lab and now try to teach them to their own students."

Alibali, who studies how gesture influences childhood learning and development, says Goldin-Meadow's daily conduct reflected the lessons she passed on to her students. As a graduate student in Goldin-Meadow's lab, Alibali called her mentor one evening in the midst of stress about a job application. Goldin-Meadow invited her over, coaching her through the application process. "She took everything pragmatically," Alibali says. "And she handled it like she handles all stressful situations that arise in academic work—in a calm way."

Now all three women conduct their own labs, teach their own students, and continue to collaborate. In 2010 Cook and Goldin-Meadow published "Gesture Makes Memories That Last" in the *Journal of Memory and Language*, and Alibali and Goldin-Meadow are at work on a review paper on gesture and learning. Because their programs are so similar, students often apply to all three; Alibali continues to mentor one student now at Chicago, where Goldin-Meadow advises him as well.

Goldin-Meadow has always treated the sisters as colleagues, but their kinship goes further, she says. "I feel like I'm a grandmother to their students."

—*Christina Pillsbury, '13*

profile

PRINCIPAL REACH

For the leaders of the University of Chicago Charter School, being in charge means being in the thick of change.

BY LYDIALYLE GIBSON

PHOTOGRAPHY BY CHARLIE SIMOKAITIS



Around 1:30, **Jared Washington** steps into his third classroom of the afternoon, squeezing the knob silently and easing open the door. It's a few minutes after the bell, and as Washington sidles in, a dozen or so sixth-grade heads turn, looking up at him from lab tables and cross-legged perches on the floor, before returning their gaze to the teacher, who's explaining the classifications of sea life: crabs, whales, seaweed; bottom dwellers, nekton, plankton. Washington picks his way to the back of the room, sits down beside a skinny kid in khaki corduroys, and

asks, "What are you working on?" "The *ocean*," the boy whispers back. Washington sets up a small video camera on the table and presses record. Then he opens a black notebook and begins writing down everything: the whiteboard drawings of fish and wavy lines, the lists of key terms, the questions the teacher calls out to her students—"Is a jelly fish a producer, a consumer, or a decomposer?" "What are the abiotic factors?"—and the answers they call back.

He makes note of the three girls swapping lip gloss in the corner, the boy next to him making paper footballs, the kids one table over who raise their hands excitedly at every question. As the class winds down, he passes out slips of white paper, asking every student to write what the day's lesson was





Students are used to seeing the principal in class.



Jared Washington talks to students about their classwork.

about and whether it was too hard, too easy, or just right.

Washington is the founding director at Carter G. Woodson Middle School, which opened in 2008 as the fourth campus of the University of Chicago Charter School. In other words, he's the principal. Bald and stern faced—although he's not as stern as he looks—Washington is a man of big gestures and a bigger voice, and he seems propelled by a perpetual knot of energy. He's rarely in his office; instead he's in classrooms and hallways, talking to teachers and students, checking out science projects and social-studies papers, keeping order. Surrounded by sixth, seventh, and eighth graders, Washington thinks constantly about college and how to get them there. How to make sure they reach the other side with a bachelor's degree and a future they can choose for themselves. "Our goal here is to get kids not just to college, but through college," he says. Which means helping them pick the right high school and making sure they're ready when they get there. "Getting into high school in Chicago is like getting into college. It sets you on the path." You can feel him almost physically pushing them forward.

In many ways, the wind is with him. As the principal of a charter school, Washington has more power, he says, to "make change rapidly" than other public schools in Chicago, more freedom to put new programs in place, more control over teacher-hiring decisions. And Woodson's affiliation with the University means he has resources at his disposal—support from the Urban Education Institute and access to a wealth of research, not least of which is the Consortium on Chicago School Research's 20 years of data on what makes for a good school, a good teacher, a good principal.

But there are harder realities. Woodson—or CGW, as it's known to students and staff—is located on the South Side, at 45th and Cottage Grove, in a neighborhood that struggles with poverty and crime. Eighty-two percent of Woodson's 400 students come from low-income families. Students walk home past liquor stores and vacant lots and boarded-up apartment buildings. What Washington calls the "fine pasture" out front, a grassy field stretching almost a city block, is what's left of the public housing this school building originally served.

Washington is haunted by statistics. Consortium studies show that about half of Chicago Public Schools students do not graduate from high school, and that CPS students have only a six percent chance of earning a bachelor's degree by the time they're 25. "Our kids are coming in, many of them at grade level, but some of them two years or three years behind," Washington says. "And even that—just meeting grade level on the ISAT, the Illinois achievement exam—is not good enough. If you're just meeting grade level, you're not on track to get a 20 on the ACT. And if you don't get a 20 on the ACT, then your chances of going to a decent college and persevering are very low." In 2011, 77 percent of Woodson students, and 81 percent of the school's eighth graders, met or exceeded ISAT standards in reading, math, and science, a seven-point gain from 2010. Those numbers are good; compared to other CPS schools, they're really good. Washington wants them to be better. "The raw fact is, for many kids coming from the neighborhoods we serve, if they're not on track by eighth grade, they're probably not going to get on track."



Jarred Brown takes notes while observing a class.

To Washington, middle school offers the “last best chance to intervene” in students’ lives before the statistics harden like concrete around their ankles. It’s the last best chance, he says, to instill habits they don’t yet know they’ll need, to show them how to study, how to think, how to live. “They’re still figuring out who they are. If we have the right type of institution, the right type of people, the right systems, the right program, we can have a hand in giving kids the sense that they’re intelligent, they’re supremely capable, that the world is theirs.”

He knows these kids. Twenty-five years ago, they were his classmates in Hopkins Park, Illinois, where he grew up the youngest of ten children. His family was poor—so was most everybody he knew—and the local schools, he says, didn’t offer much learning. But at home his parents fostered

IF THEY’RE NOT ON TRACK BY EIGHTH GRADE, THEY’RE PROBABLY NOT GOING TO GET ON TRACK.

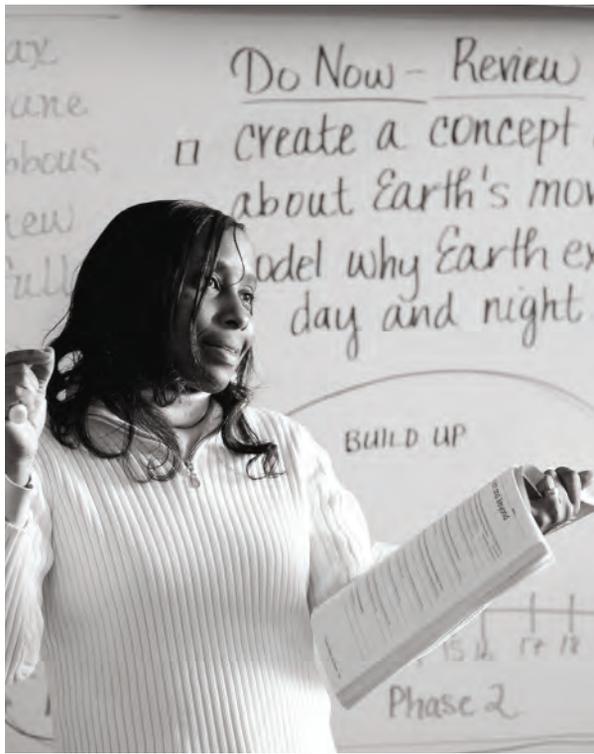
an “informal habit of reading,” and most of his siblings went to college. By the time he was in kindergarten he knew how to read, and when he was five, he spent a summer living with his oldest sister, who was in grad school. College wasn’t abstract to him; it was a real destination. He knew he would get there, even if school didn’t help. Not everyone could count on that. He remembers looking around at his high-school graduation and wondering, “Where’s everybody at?”

When Woodson started, it wasn’t yet Woodson. It was a hallway upstairs at North Kenwood/Oakland elementary, the charter school’s oldest campus. That’s where Washington helped develop the middle-school program from scratch and incubated it for four years before spinning it off into its own campus in 2008. After all the years he spent organizing the curriculum and sorting out policies and systems and facilities, Washington says he’s finally able to devote himself to the job that ought to be any principal’s biggest one: instructional leader. “It’s a strange paradox—most principals don’t get to do the thing that they’re held accountable for every year. You’re measured by your results.”

Along with Jarred Brown, his assistant principal—the two work in such tandem that many students think Brown is their principal—Washington spends much of his days in classrooms, taking notes and recording video that he later goes over in detail with teachers, discussing what they did well and what they might have done better. He pushes them to expect



Some students believe Brown is their principal.



Teacher Davia Parker likes Woodson's "collaborative spirit."

more from their students and from themselves. “We have really great teachers here,” Washington says. “Fifteen-, 20-year veterans. But the difference in the quality that has to be done when you’re trying to close the achievement gap is so significant that even the best teachers have to step their game up.”

His job is to help them do that, he says. And to harness the school’s resources—not just faculty but also the parents and the community. “What’s going on down on 47th Street, I can’t change that,” says Washington, who learned as a principal in training a decade ago on the far South Side how a neighborhood’s problems can flood into a school. “I can’t take the liquor store from that corner. But I can change what happens in this school. I can change who we hire, the philosophy, I can make sure what we do is rooted in a body of knowledge. When we know better we do better. What the teachers can change is what they do, and what they plan to do, in the classroom every day.”

Studies from the Consortium on Chicago School Research support Washington’s beliefs. In 2010 Consortium researchers published *Organizing Schools for Improvement: Lessons from Chicago* (University of Chicago Press), a book that synthesizes longitudinal surveys and data from 390 of the city’s public schools. The authors identified five “essentials” for school improvement: strong leadership, ambitious instruction, involved parents and community, collaborative teachers, and a nurturing and safe environment. Schools need all five to improve and thrive, and leadership often acts as the catalyst. “When I talk about the book, I usually say that the findings make sense, and they’re logical, and one almost has to ask why you have to do a study to establish them,” says

Penny Sebring, Consortium founding director and one of the book’s five coauthors. “But the fact is, if you go out into Chicago and look for schools that are strong in three to five of the areas, you won’t find that many.”

She says the principal’s job is singularly difficult and important. The principal is the one who must build trust among teachers while also holding them accountable—a “cheerleader with an edge,” Sebring says—and build engagement among parents and neighbors, sometimes in neighborhoods where there’s more crime than community. The job takes its toll. Sebring points to a 2008 Consortium report that found principals stay an average of four years, and that at any given time, half of Chicago Public Schools principals had been in their jobs for fewer than that. “That’s not very long,” she says. School improvement requires stability.

I CAN MAKE SURE WHAT WE DO IS ROOTED IN A BODY OF KNOWLEDGE. WHEN WE KNOW BETTER WE DO BETTER.



Tanika Island-Smith visits NKO's classrooms every day.



"I always want to see what they're working on," she says.

At North Kenwood/Oakland (NKO), **Tanika Island-Smith** is in her fifth year as director. She came in 2001 as a fourth- and fifth-grade teacher. The campus opened in 1998 near the corner of 47th and Ellis, and almost 15 years later, it is one of the few schools that the Consortium has identified as strong in the essentials. Like Washington, Island-Smith sees her primary role as an instructional leader, and she spends most of her days making rounds through every classroom, listening in on teachers' lessons, talking with children about what they're working on. She takes a pad of Post-its with her to write feedback, which she sticks on the wall by the door for teachers as she leaves. One morning in early December as she cycled through the classrooms, she listened to a fourth grader read aloud a page of notes about Mount Rushmore; asked two second graders to read a Navaho poem aloud to her, and then again, concentrating on their halting cadence as they struggled to sound out the words; and listened to a third grader trying to explain why the grandmother in an assigned book might have thought of her heirlooms as "her treasure." She hugs every teacher—"they know me as a hugger," she says—and kneels down next to students to talk with them. Often she tells them to focus. "They know what it means."

Collaboration with teachers is central to Island-Smith's leadership, she says. She describes NKO's professional development sessions, in which all 25 of the school's teachers gather to critique videos of each other's lessons. "Part of my role as the instructional leader is to empower everyone here to become experts," she says. "It can't just be me giving that feedback. We're all professionals, and we all want to be the

best we can at what we can do." Building trust with and among the faculty is integral to that process, she says. Trust fosters a sense of family and safety among the staff. "It's not that we don't have difficult times or hard conversations that don't go as wonderful as we wanted," she says, "but we always recover because of the established relationships and what we're trying to do. People understand we're here for the kids. We're not going to have a conversation that's not directly tied to student success and students' needs."

At Woodson, Washington has a similar system. Sitting down with the ten pages of notes he took in two days of observing the sixth-grade science class, he rubs his head. On one side of each page he's written what the teacher said; on the other, what students said. He analyzes how the teacher asked questions to the whole classroom, how she "whips them up" before asking them to sit down. He wants her keep her lectures shorter, to put students to work sooner, to show them exactly what she wants them to do—to "give them a scaffold to climb on"—and then hold them to that expectation. "That's how we close this achievement gap," he says. "When kids get that good ambitious instruction on a regular basis, we see that they're able to make serious gains."

Washington is still working to build the trust among teachers that NKO has. Hard conversations are sometimes unavoidable—that's what Sebring means when she calls principals cheerleaders with an edge. "In some cases the relationship is tenuous," Washington says. "In other cases, it's a very cooperative relationship. We have teachers who come down and seek out me and Mr. Brown: 'Hey, I'm working on this, can I get some feedback?' 'Can you



Washington (left) and Brown oversee dismissal.



Here the job of crossing guard belongs to the principals.

come up and look at this lesson?” Science teacher and department chair Will Spotts is one of those. “In teaching, excellence is a place you visit from time to time,” he says. “You don’t camp out in excellence. There’s good days and bad days—there’s good five minutes. You don’t get to stay at excellent.” But Washington, Spotts says, makes it possible “to get there more often. And I respect that.”

The critique sessions are part of a larger professional-development system in which teachers meet after school twice a week, much like they do at NKO, to go over lesson plans and offer each other suggestions. “I like the fact that the administrators are hands-on,” says science teacher Davia Parker. “There’s a collaborative spirit here.” Sometimes the conversations are hard, “but if you do it in the spirit of progress and fostering excellence as a professional, then you don’t take it personally.”

Twenty years ago, Parker started her career in this same building, teaching eighth-grade social studies in the school that first occupied this space. She lasted one year. “It was pure chaos,” she says. “I had to leave.” This is her first year at the charter school, and the experience, she says, is different from anywhere else she’s worked. Part of what’s different is the leadership. “Even though we have a lot of expectations on us here, they’re reasonable expectations,” she says. “There are so many administrators I’ve worked under who say, ‘We want you to do this, this, this, this, this, *and* that within this amount of time.’ And you’re like, ‘That’s impossible.’ Here, it’s a lot of work—and hard work—but it’s doable; it’s reasonable. And it’s for a good reason. It makes sense.”

Woodson remains a work in progress. According to the Consortium analysis, based on student and teacher surveys, Woodson “needs support” in three of the five essentials, including school leadership. But as Sebring points out, it’s the newest charter-school campus, and it’s still finding its stride. Washington is proud of the strides it’s made already, the innovations he and Brown have put into place. One of them is an exploratory class called X-Block. Teachers come up with the subjects—cooking, bicycling, architecture, crochet. “There’s nothing kids won’t try,” Washington says. Each trimester students choose from a new list. “It’s a different kind of teaching,” he says. “Teachers are sharing a passion, students are exploring an interest—that’s a different dynamic.”

In another program Washington organized, students who maintain certain academic and behavior standards—no tardies, no demerits, no missing homework—are awarded “independent scholar” status. They don’t have to wear uniforms on Fridays, and they go on extra field trips to places like the Lincoln Park Zoo and the Chicago History Museum. One year they went camping at a recreated Native American village in Wisconsin; this year they’re heading on a road trip to Atlanta to visit historically black colleges. “We try to think of as many ways to incentivize the independent scholars as possible,” Washington says. A week before Thanksgiving, he and Brown hosted a breakfast in the cafeteria for independent scholars and their parents. In paper aprons and plastic gloves, teachers served up a buffet of cheese grits, sausage, eggs, and biscuits to about 200 students who’d earned an in-



Brown chats with students after school.



By 3 p.m., with most students gone, quiet returns.

vation to the breakfast. Washington and Brown bantered with them as they waited in line for food. “I want to make sure everybody here is on the list,” Washington declares, frowning with fake seriousness. “What about this young man?” he says, as a lanky kid with glasses shuffles past, blushing and smiling at the attention.

“Most of the kids are a little scared of him,” says Tinishia Legaux, Woodson’s director of academic and social supports and Washington’s wife (the two met at work). “But usually it’s the most difficult kids who really get to know him. And after they graduate, they come back year after year to see him, to ask for his advice. And they bring their report cards.”

EXCELLENCE IS A PLACE YOU VISIT FROM TIME TO TIME IN TEACHING. YOU DON’T GET TO CAMP OUT IN EXCELLENCE.

At 2:38 p.m., Woodson’s school day is over. From every door, 400 students clamor onto the sidewalks in the late-fall gray. In their shared office, Brown and Washington silently pull on their coats and walk outside, Brown in his floppy fleece hat, Washington with the cane he carries for effect. Woodson has no school buses, so students whose parents can’t pick them up must walk home or catch the Number 4 CTA bus at Cottage Grove and 45th Street. Brown and Washington oversee dismissal every day amid a cacophony of students, herding them off toward home before it gets dark and dangerous. “Go home,” Washington commands a group of girls lingering on the corner. And to a boy heading unexpectedly west, away from his house: “Where are you going?” The boy mumbles something about visiting a relative. Meanwhile, Brown calls out to a girl in a pink sweater. “Where is your coat?” he asks. “In my bag,” she answers shyly. “Well, put it on!” he teases. “It’s cold outside.”

“We don’t have crossing guards,” Washington says, “so it’s up to us.” By 3 p.m., all but the last few students disperse, and Brown strikes up a conversation with a seventh grader new to Woodson when Washington wanders over. “How are your grades?” he asks. He asks this so often that students sometimes answer before the words are out of his mouth. “Are they decent?” She nods, but not convincingly. He presses. It comes out that she has As and Bs, except in math. It’s OK, Washington says. He’ll help. “Do you have a plan? Come see me tomorrow.” ♦



Read about Washington in the classroom and find out how to visit the charter-school campuses at mag.uchicago.edu.

arts

THESE WALLS CAN TALK

The murals decorating the University of Chicago Charter School campuses tell stories of success.

BY AMY BRAVERMAN PUMA

PHOTOGRAPHY BY LLOYD DEGRANE

At North Kenwood/Oakland Elementary School, paintings of actual students reading decorate the walls.

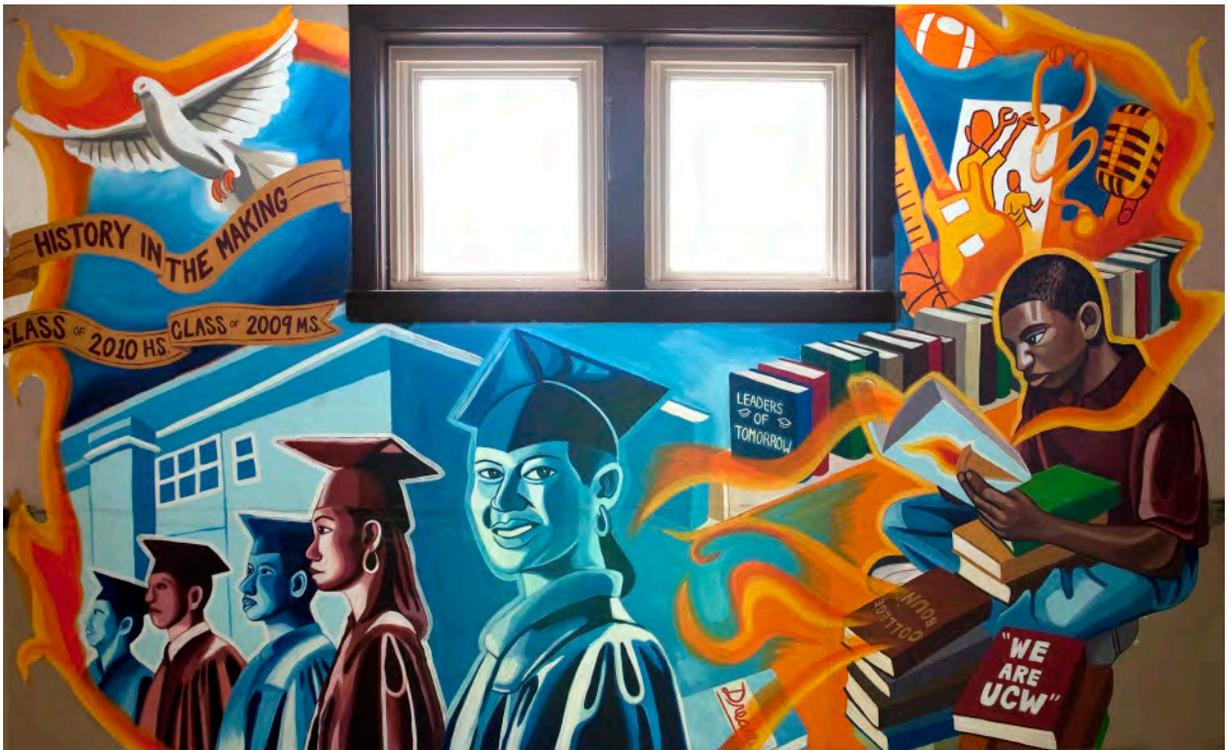
We are a community of learners and leaders.” Students see those words painted at the entrance of North Kenwood/Oakland Elementary, one of four campuses of the University of Chicago Charter School. It’s a mantra from the school’s director, **Tanika Island-Smith**, that sets the tone for the murals and quotes found throughout the rest of the building. Students at the school, famous African Americans, and others make up that community of learners and leaders, Island-Smith says, walking the halls. “So there is Barack Obama, and there is Maya Angelou.” Outside the auditorium Katherine Dunham, PhB’36, reads on a bench near the lake, while Paul Robeson stands behind her, also reading. Between the lockers are paintings of NKO graduates, their noses in books.

Teachers chose the quotes painted above their doors, words by people such as Gandhi, George Washington Carver, Eleanor Roosevelt, Nikki Giovanni. So as students pass through the halls, Island-Smith says, “you know these people, you read this quote every day before you cross the

threshold to your classroom. It puts something on their minds, and also then a person to go and study and to learn more about.”

All four schools have used their walls—both inside and, at Donoghue Elementary, outside—for education, motivation, arts curriculum, and community outreach. The paintings reflect each campus’s specific values: NKO focuses on “reading and achievement,” says **Linda Wing**, director of schools and community engagement at the University’s Urban Education Institute, which runs the charter school. At Woodlawn Secondary School the theme is “making history by graduating.” At Carter G. Woodson [AB 1908, AM 1908] Middle School it’s “students leading themselves, their school, and their world.” Donoghue values “family and community.”

Some of the murals are painted by professional artists. Others are done by students and teachers, an artistic complement to research they’ve done on their neighborhood or a historical figure or event. Sometimes students pair up with volunteers from the community or from corporations that have donated time and money to the schools. The murals allow students, teachers, and directors to “put their mark” on buildings they share with other Chicago Public Schools, Wing says. “The murals are our signature.” ♦



At Woodlawn Secondary School, these students made history by being part of the first graduating class.



Performers Robeson and Dunham read by the lake at NKO.



Quotes from Chicago journalist Sydney J. Harris and Ruby Bridges, the first black child to attend an all-white school in the South, inspire this hallway mural at Woodson.



At Woodson Middle School, students and their history research adorn a wall.

glimpses

VIVIAN GUSSIN PALEY

BY RUTH E. KOTT, AM'07

PHOTOGRAPHY BY CHRIS KIRZEDER

Vivian Gussin Paley, PhD'47, the only kindergarten teacher to receive a MacArthur "genius" grant, didn't go to kindergarten. Growing up in Chicago's Humboldt Park neighborhood, she spent a few weeks at James Russell Lowell Elementary School when she was five. "Shortly into the school year," she remembers, "the teacher stopped my mother at the door and said, 'You know, I think maybe Vivian might enjoy waiting and starting school at first grade.'" Paley's mother asked if her daughter was having trouble. The teacher responded, "No, but when we come together at circle time, she sits apart, just watching us."

It's an apt image of a woman who has dedicated her life to studying preschool- and kindergarten-age children. In her almost four decades of teaching, mostly at the University of Chicago Laboratory Schools, Paley has focused specifically on the importance of imaginary play. Play, she says, is how children learn to make sense of the world and interact with other children. The author of more than a dozen books, Paley tape-recorded her classes, including students' private conversations, to glimpse how they communicated with each other. In *The Boy Who Would Be a Helicopter: The Uses of Storytelling in the Classroom* (Harvard University Press, 1990), for example, she explored how a preschool boy who isolated himself from the teacher and his classmates later joined the group by becoming an actor in other children's games.

THERE'S A YEAR GONE ASTRAY: A YEAR OF LOST STORIES, OF LOST LITTLE CHARACTERS AND PLOTS.

Skipping that kindergarten year has informed Paley's work, she acknowledges. "Why, I ask myself, did I devote my whole working lifetime to figuring out what it is that makes children comfortable early on in the social group?" Paley says. "I missed something—something that I needed."

THE KEY TO EASY CONVERSATION

I discovered well into my teaching career that if a subject concerns in some way friendship, fantasy, fairness, or fear, children will keep up a dialogue with you all day long. And with each other.

IMPROV EXPERTS

[Children's play has] a kind of Second City spontaneity going on constantly. The great thing about the preschool and kindergarten improvisation and the audience is that it is impossible to get it wrong. ... Somehow or other, anything another child pretends or says is considered quite remarkable by all the other children.



Vivian Paley missed out on kindergarten as a child but spent her whole career there as an adult.

STORY REWRITE

The *Three Little Pigs* is a wonderful story to act out. The boys all could take their turns being the wolf, but I remember when a [kindergarten] girl decided that the baby pig would stay home with the mother, that she would not be in any danger because the wolf would not huff at the mother's house. The children loved it, even the boys who were the fierce wolves. The idea that we can take a piece of literature and ... put a different ending on it is fun in play. But it's really well into the beginning of an academic frame of mind. You can take a set of facts, and you can find a different outcome if you play around with it.

PLAY IN HIGHER ED

I was on a panel once with a [chemistry] Nobelist from Harvard. ... He spoke right after [me and] said, "Before I go any further, I want to tell you that I do with my freshman chemistry classes at Harvard what Vivian does in preschool and kindergarten. Before we learn the elements, I say to the children, to my students: Now pretend this element doesn't

exist, has not been discovered. Pretend a world without this element. And tell us what it is. And let's act out that world and then put the element into it." That was one of the most incredible pieces of connection making.

CHANGING CURRICULA

We now expect at the end of the kindergarten year what used to be expected at the end of the first-grade year. In other words, there's a year gone astray: a year of lost stories, of lost little characters and plots, thanks to technology, early formal lessons, busier than ever families. ... There is a whole lot of imaginative work that has been part of our creativity and invention that seems to lack the time for expression. The good news is I'm not the only one who realizes this. Wherever I go, being with preschool or kindergarten teachers or first-grade teachers, a dozen at a time or 1,000 at a time, they understand the problem right now.



See more selections from Paley's interview at mag.uchicago.edu.

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- 2 Pandemics, Swine- and Avian-Flu! Oh, My!**
Wednesday, May 9, 2012 from 12 to 1:30 pm
Marian H. Adly, MSc
MScTRM Alumna, Class of 2011

peer review



Actors in a 1986 University Theater production of Sławomir Mrożek's *Tango* warm up before a dress rehearsal. Director Joan Polner, AB'87, had them act as "bubbles in the sea."

PHOTOGRAPH BY J. BRADLEY BURGESS

Stretch yourself

BY HARRIET HEYMAN, AM'72

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ACEY HARPER

Nearly 20 years ago, I enrolled my two toddlers in an acrobatics class at a hole-in-the-wall circus school in San Francisco. The boys stuck with it for a few years, but as they grew up, they moved on to soccer, baseball, and girls. I stayed, caught by the strange beauty that first attracted me. Since then, for more than 15 years, I have been training on trapeze.

For flying trapeze, I climb the ladder up to a narrow perch, grasp a 30-inch steel bar, and step into the air. Swinging like a pendulum, I let go, launch an aerial trick, and soar toward the outstretched hands of a muscled catcher who is twice my size and half my age. I also train on static trapeze. In static, the trapeze, mounted on long ropes, does not swing back and forth. It can, however, twist and judder and at times bind as tight as a tourniquet. I do a routine, choreographed to tango music, and work on tricks called dolphins, unicorns, Russian rolls, and meat hooks. Bruises and ripped calluses go with the territory. For me, now in my early 60s, trapeze has become a quiet passion.

Years ago, in this dilapidated gym, I reinvented myself. I was in my late 40s. With no more trouble than it took to change my diaper bag into a gym bag, I could walk out of

my house and, minutes later, be among a different species. These honed men and women worked past pain at something so difficult, unusual, and stunning, and—from the perspective of the outside world—something that appeared utterly useless. I was hooked.

I read about acrobatics. I wrote about acrobatics. I took my family to every circus that came to town, from Cirque du Soleil to traveling mud shows. I flew to Paris and Monte Carlo to watch international circus festivals. I delved into the history and biomechanics of acrobatics. Mostly, I trained. And in the process, an infatuation grew into a deep bond.

In acrobatics, separate themes of my own life spiraled together: work and play, memory, friendship, solitude, discipline, frustration, risk and failure, love and desire, creativity and writing. Acrobatics became my North Star, shedding faraway light on matters close to home. Training challenged me, and not just physically. It made me question where I was in the arc of my life.

I first walked into the gym a middle-aged mom, resigned to gravity. But these athletes, amateur and otherwise, were so buoyant. They weren't all young, but they possessed a defiant power. Being around them made me ask myself, "What does it mean to grow older?"

Somewhere along the way, I had donned the burka of sexual

invisibility and passed through the marketplace unnoticed. I might have stayed cloaked and seething. But working on layouts and pinwheels, I reinhabited my body, entering a new phase that had nothing to do with seduction, mating, or procreation. Did my body disguise my self, or reveal it? Was acrobatics, late in the day, a last grasp at youth? No, it seemed more like the ideal traveling companion for right where I was now. I had found a new circle.

The circus school was a day trip through purgatory. Here we were—people of all ages, shapes, abilities, backgrounds—training, bundled up in a frigid gym that seemed two steps away from the wrecking ball, all in the name of developing skills in an art form that few in the outside world understood or cared about. Stilt walkers, jugglers, aerialists, hand balancers, tumblers, and

Today few people run away to join the circus. There are more options and fewer circuses. But however expressed, the desire to break the ties that bind still burns.



Heyman's book of photographs and essays features acrobats outdoors, such as this pose on the Brooklyn Bridge.

contortionists practiced in self-defined spaces, oblivious of fliers doing tricks and plummeting into the net that stretched the length of the 80-foot gymnasium. Most students practiced in stoic silence: the same motions, hour after hour, day after day, before work, after school. Even for the youngest, strongest, and most athletically gifted, nothing came easily or without pain. Acrobatics was the great equalizer. Nobody was a star.

Every once in a while, I'd witness an instant that seared into my brain. It was an incidental motion or gesture. The acrobat wasn't even aware of it. Unlike dancers, who rehearse in front of mirrors, acrobats can't see what they're doing. They feel where they are in space and intuitively make minute adjustments.

I wanted to capture these acts that

defied age and gender and gravity. I started to write down these mental snapshots. These frozen moments of grace and intuition sparked the idea for my book, *Private Acts*.

Today few people run away to join the circus. There are more options and fewer circuses. But however expressed, the desire to break the ties that bind still burns. Who at some point doesn't crave a new script? For most of us, it's amorphous longing, the quiet desperation of those privileged with choices. Something about the proud defiance of the acrobat embodies that urge. Watching a body fly beyond its limits inspires hope.

I was lucky, stumbling on acrobatics. For me, it is both recreation and re-creation. It touches something that already lived deep inside me. I'm not pretending

to be someone I'm not. I don't expect acrobatics to make me thin, young, or famous. All it gives me is something simple and wondrous. Every so often, after months of frustrating practice and backsliding, a trick works beautifully. I don't know why. When it happens, it seems natural. Without fear, inhibition, or desire, the body moves fluidly in finite space and time. After years of training, I'm learning the art of letting go. Everything that went before is distilled into one defining moment that gives back joy. ♦

Adapted from *Private Acts: The Acrobat Sublime* (Rizzoli, 2011) by Harriet Heyman, photographs by Acey Harper.

NOTES

BELIEF IN GOD (PARTICLE)

Starting in January, physicist **Joe Incandela**, AB'81, SM'85, PhD'86, takes leadership of the hunt for the Higgs boson, known as the "God particle." Incandela will direct 3,600 scientists at Switzerland's Large Hadron Collider, the world's most powerful particle accelerator, to try to determine the existence of the particle—the only elementary particle predicted by the Standard Model of particle physics that has yet to be observed.

AN EYE FOR ADMINISTRATION

In December **Dimitri Azar**, MBA'11, a cornea specialist, was named dean of the University of Illinois College of Medicine at Chicago, after serving as interim dean since May.

EXECUTIVE BRANCH APPOINTMENTS

Howard D. Unger, MBA'84, founder of investment firm Saw Mill Capital, has been named to President Obama's US Holocaust Memorial Council. The son of a Holocaust survivor, Unger serves on the US Holocaust Memorial Museum's Committee on Conscience, which works to spark worldwide action against genocide and other crimes against humanity. Also working in international



Ingrid Wuerth



HISTORICAL MEMORY

The Balzekas Museum of Lithuanian Culture in Chicago, which has the largest collection of Lithuanian artifacts outside of the Eastern European country, has named Audrius Plioplys, MD'75, its 2011 Man of the Year. A neuroscientist and visual artist, Plioplys organized an exhibit, including children's art and photographs, that focused on the Stalin-ordered mass deportations, in which millions of people were sent to Siberia over the course of the 1940s.

justice is **Ingrid Wuerth**, JD'94, director of Vanderbilt University's International Legal Studies Program, who has been named to the State Department's Advisory Committee on International Law.

SURVEY SAYS ...

In October **Jack J. Honomichl**, AM'56, received a Lifetime Achievement Award at the Council of American Survey Research Organizations's annual conference. Every year Honomichl analyzes US and international marketing, advertising, and public-opinion data to create a state-of-the-industry report, published by the American Marketing Association journal *Marketing News*. In 1990 he founded a newsletter, *Inside Research*, that Barron's has called "the bible of the market research industry."

ETHICAL AWARD

Kathleen Cranley Glass, AM'66, professor emerita of pediatrics and biomedical ethics at McGill University in Montreal, has received a Lifetime Achievement Award from

the Canadian Bioethics Society. Her research has included ethical and legal issues involving children, psychiatric patients, and research subjects.

HIGH HONOR

On November 15 **Glenn Webb**, MFA'59, PhD'70, received the Order of the Rising Sun from the Japanese government at the Japanese consul general's official residence in Los Angeles. Webb spent 50 years teaching Asian studies in Japan and in the United States, including almost two decades as director of Pepperdine University's Institute for the Study of Asian Culture.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

IntegriChain, a health-care information-technology company led by **Kevin Leininger**, MBA'91, was listed as No. 19 on *Forbes's* 2011 list of Most Promising Companies. Creating software for pharmaceutical companies looking for sales and inventory data from local pharmacies, IntegriChain raised \$3.25 million in venture capital in early 2011.

ABOVE: PHOTO BY ALEX GARCIA / CHICAGO TRIBUNE; LEFT: PHOTO COURTESY VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY

RELEASES

The Magazine lists a selection of general-interest books, films, and albums by alumni. For additional alumni releases, use the link to the Magazine's Goodreads bookshelf at mag.uchicago.edu.

THIS TIME IT'S PERSONAL: TEACHING ACADEMIC WRITING THROUGH CREATIVE NONFICTION

By John S. O'Connor, AB'86, MAT'87; National Council of Teachers of English, 2011.
Former Lab Schools teacher **John S. O'Connor**, named a 2007 Golden Apple Teacher of Distinction, aims to connect high-school and college students with their lessons by having them write about what they know: their own lives. He includes creative-nonfiction writing assignments, such as op-ed essays, autobiographies, and blogs, as well as sample student responses.

IT WAS A LONG TIME AGO, AND IT NEVER HAPPENED ANYWAY: RUSSIA AND THE COMMUNIST PAST

By David Satter, AB'68; Yale University Press, 2011.
For more than two decades journalist **David Satter** reported from the Soviet Union and Russia, and this book examines how the country's attitudes toward Soviet Communism have changed—or not. In fact, he argues, many citizens seem to have forgotten the crimes inflicted on the population during the Soviet regime and even go so far as to mourn that era. Russian society, Satter says, has not learned to appreciate the value of the individual citizen and instead glorifies the state's objectives.

SOULMATES: RESURRECTING EVE

By Juliana Geran Pilon, AB'69, AM'71, PhD'74; Transaction Publishers, 2012.
Juliana Geran Pilon, director of the Center for Culture and Security at the Institute of World Politics, examines the Adam and Eve narrative as an argument for an egalitarian view of men and women. As told by Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, she says, the Genesis story

presents the sexes as equal despite their different functions within society. The common view of Eve as sinful and dangerous, she argues, has distorted that original message.

THE STEAL: A CULTURAL HISTORY OF SHOPLIFTING

By Rachel Shteir, AB'87; Penguin Press, 2011.
In a different take on Eve, DePaul University dramaturgy and dramatic-criticism professor **Rachel Shteir** writes in *The Steal*, quoting a security expert, that the first woman also became first shoplifter when she took the apple. Today about 27 million Americans shoplift, according to the National Association of Shoplifting Prevention. For this cultural history, Shteir talked to shoplifters, police, and storeowners to grasp why people nab items from store shelves and how cultures over time have understood the practice.

SELLING FEAR: COUNTERTERRORISM, THE MEDIA, AND PUBLIC OPINION

By Brigitte L. Nacos, Yaeli Bloch-Elkon, and Robert Y. Shapiro, AM'77, AM'78, PhD'82; University of Chicago Press, 2011.
Counterterrorism methods rely as much on media coverage as terrorism strategies, argues Columbia University political-science professor **Robert Y. Shapiro**, et al., in a book arguing that the Bush administration maintained a climate of fear after 9/11. As partners in spreading fear, the authors say, the media no longer served as watchdogs, reporting without questioning the administration's statements and plans.

THE MIDWESTERN NATIVE GARDEN: NATIVE ALTERNATIVES TO NONNATIVE FLOWERS AND PLANTS, AN ILLUSTRATED GUIDE

By Charlotte Adelman, AB'59, JD'62, and Bernard L. Schwartz; Ohio University Press, 2011.
Illinoisans **Charlotte Adelman** and her husband recommend ways to incorporate native Midwest flora, such as butterfly milkweed and tall prairie grasses, into local gardens. Nonnative plants threaten indigenous ones and the wildlife that depend on them. Because some gardeners like the look of the nonnative plants, the authors suggest



native flowers that look similar to invasive species, or grow at similar rates, to replace them.

HAMLET'S ARAB JOURNEY: SHAKESPEARE'S PRINCE AND NASSER'S GHOST

By Margaret Litvin, AM'00, PhD'06; Princeton University Press, 2011.
Hamlet is the most quoted literary work in Arab politics today—intellectuals identify with the Danish prince's political hopes dashed by older generations, says Boston University assistant professor of Arabic and comparative literature **Margaret Litvin**. She explores how Hamlet took on an Arabic identity, dissecting productions of the play in Syria, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, and Kuwait. She also argues that Egypt's revolutionary mid-20th-century leader Gamal Abdel Nasser set the scene for the Arab Hamlet character to emerge as a visionary activist.

EFFECTIVE FRONTLINE FUNDRAISING: A GUIDE FOR NONPROFITS, POLITICAL CANDIDATES, AND ADVOCACY GROUPS

By Jeffrey David Stauch, AM'06; Apress, 2011.
This book provides strategies for fundraising and how to maintain good relationships between an organization or political candidate and the donor base. **Jeffrey David Stauch**, assistant director of principal gifts at Middlebury College, also discusses how to recruit volunteers.

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Some places to go in 2012

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ISRAEL AND JORDAN AUGUST 27-SEPTEMBER 10, 2012

Travel from Tel Aviv to the Sea of Galilee and Jerusalem and into Jordan to the Dead Sea, Petra, and more. *Led by Senior Lecturer Ariela Finkelstein.*

RISING CHINA AND THE MIGHTY YANGZI RIVER SEPTEMBER 4-15, 2012

Explore the beauty and grandeur of the Middle Kingdom. *Led by Senior Lecturer Fangpei Cai.*

LEGENDARY TURKEY SEPTEMBER 6-20, 2012

Discover Turkey from Istanbul to the Turquoise coast. *Study trip leader TBD.*

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RENTALS

Mexico, Pacific coast. 4-bedroom hill-top retreat in charming Sayulita, north of Puerto Vallarta. Ocean views, pool, garden. casadoschicos.com.

Italy, Tuscany-Umbria border. Beautiful 5-bedroom country villa, designer interiors, stunning views, heated infinity pool, private grounds. Available year-round. poderepalazzo.com.

Maine, Acadia National Park, Bar Harbor/Ellsworth area. Lakefront cottage. Loons, eagles. Utilities. 2 kayaks, canoe, rowboat. \$700/week. Sandy Quine, 203.634.0562. Cell 207.671.2726. sandraquine@yahoo.com.

US Virgin Islands, St. John. Hillcrest Guest House. Ocean views and discounts. 340.776.6774. hillcreststjohn.com.

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EVENTS

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PERSONALS

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LITE OF THE MIND

COLLECTIVE INTELLECT

Interdisciplinary research is in Chicago's DNA. A biologist and a poet mapped the metaphysical genome and, after peer review by a philosopher and an economist, published the results in the *Journal of Sociology, Biology, Theology, and Astrophysics*. Well, not really. But recent campus initiatives do stand "at the intersection of quantitative biology, neuroscience, and the study of social and individual behaviors," as well as "stimulate direct dialogue between the arts and science," and build on UChicago's "eminent interdisciplinary tradition."

Why not bring everybody under one tent—a big top, perhaps. Imagine how much knowledge could grow from more to more through a single Center for Interdisciplinary Research and Collaborative University Scholarship (CIRCUS). In the center ring, **Gary Becker**, AM'53, PhD'55, tames a bear (market), while **Martha Nussbaum** walks the tightrope of philosophical

insight and its implications for the law, **John Cacioppo** studies loneliness from the isolated perch of a unicycle, and academic acrobats like **John Boyer**, AM'69, PhD'75, **Olufunmilayo Olopade**, and **Rocky Kolb** build intellectual pyramids

that connect the Habsburgs to human genetics to the Higgs boson.

After all, as Robert Maynard Hutchins once said, "If the first faculty had met in a tent, this still would have been a great university."—*Jason Kelly*



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