



The College

SUMMER 2014 • ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE • ANNAPOLIS • SANTA FE

*Anna
Karenina*

The Truth of Stories



"How glorious fall the
valiant, sword [mallet] in
hand, in front of battle
for their native land."
—Tyrtaeus, Spartan poet
The St. John's croquet
team greets the cheering
crowd in Annapolis.

The College

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Why Stories?

“He stepped down, trying not to look long at her, as if she were the sun, yet he saw her, like the sun, even without looking.”

LEO TOLSTOY, *ANNA KARENINA*

“Emotions are what pull us in—the character’s vulnerabilities, desires, and fears,” says screenwriter Jeremy Leven (A64); he is one of several alumni profiled in this issue of *The College* who tell stories. Leven reveals “moments of truth” with nuanced, often sparse dialogue and subtext.

Although certainly not sparing with words, Count Lev Nikolayevich Tolstoy (1828-1910) revealed human emotions with great insight, with what tutor Jonathan Tuck calls “the raw power of storytelling” in his essay for this issue. Tolstoy was born at the family estate, about 130 miles south of Moscow. Educated at home by tutors, Tolstoy enrolled in the University of Kazan in 1844 to study Oriental languages; he transferred to the less demanding law faculty but left without a degree. In 1851 he joined the army and fought in the Crimean War (1853-56). Tolstoy’s two masterpieces are *War and Peace* (1869) and *Anna Karenina* (1877). He deftly paints intimate details of his characters’ lives, set against the sweeping canvas of history. Notes Santa Fe Dean J. Walter Sterling (A93) in this issue, “Tolstoy brings to life (or to the work of art) Napoleon as man and myth, the great movements of modern Russian politics, the general tumult of enlightenment rationalism (and nationalism), and the many other forces by which Europe was convulsed in the 19th century....”

Tolstoy’s fictions reveal truth. It is no surprise that they continue to be embraced by popular modern culture—for instance, both Greta Garbo (1935) and Keira Knightly (2012) starred in film adaptations of *Anna Karenina*. We care about what happens to his memorable characters—Pierre, Prince Andrei, Anna, and Kitty Levin, to name a few. “We come to know these people inside and out, better perhaps than we know our own families or close friends. It is very hard to remember that they are not real,” notes Tuck. Film director Domenic D’Andrea (A15) tells us it

is not just the suspense, but the connection made through storytelling that matters: “Storytelling ought to be done by people who want to make other people feel a little bit less alone.”

In this issue we meet Johnnies who are storytellers in modern and ancient forms, filmmakers, poets, even a fabric artist. N. Scott Momaday, Pulitzer Prize winner and artist-in-residence on the Santa Fe campus, says, “Poetry is the highest expression of language.” Along with student poets, he shares insights on this elegant form and how it touches our spirits and hearts.

The Johnnies in film featured in this issue each transform an individual vision for a story with their craft—screenwriting, directing, film editing, and digital animation, to name a few—and close collaboration with others; the end result is there for all to see on the big screen.

James Schamus (A81) describes what it took to be CEO of Focus Features, where he stewarded films that speak to the historical context of our times, and, as great stories do, captivated a generation of filmgoers. For Hanna Jayanti (SF07) film editing “is a form of writing in the visual world.” She collaborated on a documentary shown at the New Yorker Festival. Mavericks such as Mike Lacy (A12) direct music videos in which lyrics are like characters, and Geoff Marslett (SF96) jumps from writing a software program for his animated feature to directing actors without scripted dialogue. Richard Saja (SF93) transforms the art of toile.

These Johnnies have in common a deep appreciation of universal stories that connect us all. Screenwriter Lee Zlotoff (A74) shares his method for tapping these stories from the subconscious: “We are a narrative species; each night we dream and each of our dreams is a story. We need these stories,” he says.

We need oral stories as well. In this issue, tutor Claudia Hauer describes her oral history project about the founding of the Santa Fe campus 50 years ago, and the spirited pioneers who envisioned it. Chelsea Batten’s (A07) search for connection reminds us that a good conversation just might be better than anything—even a great film.

Thank you to our contributors, and especially to our readers for sharing stories! I look forward to hearing from you. —P.D.

... We want desperately to find out what will happen next.... It's this very curiosity that keeps us reading; though the book [*War and Peace*] is long, we fly through it after a while, hoping that our favorites will find the happiness they have been seeking for years. —JONATHAN TUCK, TUTOR



ART RESOURCE

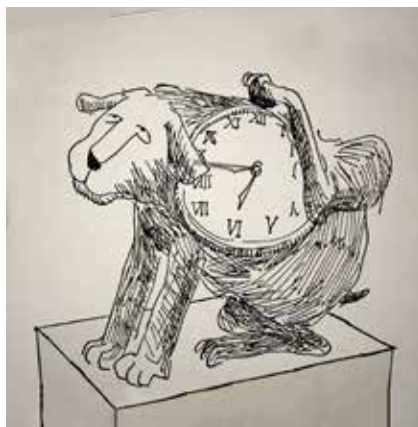


ILLUSTRATION BY JULES FEIFFER, THE PHANTOM TOLLBOOTH



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Anna Karenina illustration
by Gayle Kabaker



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(A74) at work in his Malibu home

Readers Share

Tolstoy Farm

My main memory of Tolstoy is of Leo Pickens's (A78) brilliant oral exam on his senior essay on *War and Peace* in the reading room of the old library. Separately, I learned that Gandhi was inspired by Tolstoy and lived in an ashram called Tolstoy Farm during his formative years in South Africa. There he led nonviolent protests against the "Black Law," which deprived Asians of their civil rights, until it was repealed in 1914, seven years after its promulgation.

struggle of the Transvaal Indians, and asked him to air his views on the subject of morality. . . ."

—Chris Olson (A78)

Channeling Prince Andrei

I will never forgive Tolstoy for what he did to Natasha and Anna K. That said, I was ferociously devouring *War and Peace*, for the second time, this past autumn (a book that improves with age—my age!). On the very night I was in the thick of the Borodino aftermath, I got a deep cut from

"Gandhi attributes the success of the final phase of the satyagraha campaign in South Africa between 1908 and 1914 to the 'spiritual purification and penance' afforded by the Tolstoy Farm."

—Chris Olson (A78)

Gandhi attributes the success of the final phase of the satyagraha campaign in South Africa between 1908 and 1914 to the "spiritual purification and penance" afforded by the Tolstoy Farm. The Tolstoy Farm was the second of its kind of experiments established by Gandhi. The following is an excerpt from www.tolstoyfarm.com:

"It was Tolstoy's writings that impressed [Gandhi] the most. The Russian's ideas about renouncing force as a means of opposition were akin to Gandhi's own thoughts, although he did not share Tolstoy's intense dislike for organized government. The Indian had read Tolstoy's *The Kingdom of God Is Within You* in 1894. This had stimulated his search for truth and nonviolence in his own religion. . . . Prompted by his deeper appreciation of the Tolstoyan philosophy, Gandhi wrote in October 1909 the first of his four letters to the Russian. He described in it the

a piece of glass straight into my upper thigh in an around-the-house accident. Rather than take my one-inch gaping wound to the ER in Baltimore at midnight on a Saturday, I channeled my inner Prince Andrei. I washed out the wound, poured half a bottle of peroxide over it. I tore a big strip off a clean tee shirt and wrapped my thigh. The next day—not awakening in a pool of my own blood—I walked to the ER, got my stitches, and walked to Fell's Point in time for noon tea with fellow alum João Santa Rita (A09).

—Samantha Buker (A05)

Free Speech

I remember reading Tolstoy's *War and Peace* at St. John's with great interest. I was asked to talk about it in my senior oral exam and, for once, did not feel tongue-tied, as I often did in seminar.

—Julia du Prey (née Busser) (Class of 1966)



A view from inside the Tolstoy Literary Museum in Moscow.

Literary Sites

My wife and I were in Moscow last year and visited the Tolstoy Literary Museum there. We intended to get to Tolstoy's house in Moscow, where he lived for a time with his wife and 13 children after writing his masterpieces, but we never got there.

—Mike Woolsey (Class of 1965)

Train Trips

I wrote my senior essay on Tolstoy's *War and Peace* in 1975, and it won the senior essay prize, tied with my esteemed classmate Cary Stickney's (A75) essay on Hegel. My paper was typed by Jane H., my helper-typist and I on three different typewriters at the last minute, up in my room on the third floor of the dorm with the bookstore in the basement. Probably Tolstoy typed on a typewriter, too? Don't bother looking up a copy of the paper; it was not well written! I realize this now, but I loved the experience of spending a couple of months pondering one great book and author. I retain images such as that of Nicolai lying face up on the earth, wounded, looking up at the clouds, pausing in the midst of life. All my life, I've been a religious seeker, and I'm in a very different place from where I was in '75. I live back in central Maine, whence I began my journeys from home with train trips to St. John's College in Annapolis and back. Here is peace and many distant wars. Didn't Tolstoy's life end with a train trip?

—Laura Bridgman (A75)

A Battlefield Revelation

Think of New Mexico. Now think of Russia. There's probably not a lot of overlap in your mental Venn diagram. But that wasn't the case for me when I was working towards my MA at St. John's four years ago. Tolstoy wrote that "Russia and hot weather don't go together," and it was a harsh winter in Santa Fe the first time I read *War and Peace*. I slogged through the snow and slush two nights a week to attend my preceptorial on the novel. And, of course, keeping up with the assigned readings meant taking Tolstoy along with me wherever I went that frigid winter. During a post-lunch lull at the pizzeria where I worked, Prince Andrei and I had a battlefield revelation involving an infinite and lofty sky. While my clothes were drying at the Solana Laundromat, I was hunting wolves with a nobleman and his loyal team of serfs and borzois. I swaddled myself in every blanket I owned when my heater was on the fritz and felt decidedly well-off compared to Napoleon's retreating troops. Russia and hot weather don't go together, but, for me, Russia and New Mexico somehow do.

—Wint Huskey (SFG110)

Disruptive Conclusion

I remember that [Tolstoy] seminar very well because of our discussion of the characters of Andrei and his pal Pierre, and because of *War and Peace*'s addendum—that disruptive conclusion—which we jointly concluded in seminar did not go

with the rest of *War and Peace*. Tolstoy's historical P.S. was a declaration of faith, which he wanted to make happen because he declared it so. It was the beginning of a new book. It almost spoiled the whole novel—like the extra chapter added on to T. H. White's *The Once and Future King* (which White's editor wisely cut). Years later, I've re-read both *War and Peace* and Tolstoy's addendum, but never together. In my humble opinion, *War and Peace* works infinitely better on its own, without that false handle of religious faith which Tolstoy glued to its end.
—John Dean (A70)

The Third Epilogue

Time travel to the Graduate Institute, Santa Fe, 1971: My preceptorial was *War and Peace*. My dilemma: A week before the work was due, what to write? A strong thought passed through my mind,

"Why don't I write the *Third Epilogue*?" That was followed immediately by, "But you've never written fiction in your life." What then ensued were six intense days, during which time I wrote a more than 90-page extension to Tolstoy's epic work. The words just flowed to the point that there were entire pages without one typo—and this was in the days before correcting typewriters. There were times that I had no idea what would happen next in the story. As the words flowed, I cried; I laughed. I truly felt as if Tolstoy were directing what was appearing on the page. Back to 2013: A friend said, "Why don't you put the *Third Epilogue* on Kindle?" After going through the learning curve of designing a cover, figuring out how to publish something on Kindle, and re-typing the document, *War and Peace: The Third Epilogue* is now on Kindle under the pseudonym of Samantha Jean Wiley.
—Margaret Sansom (SFGI74)



A Well-Worn Copy

Here is a picture of my copy of *War and Peace* from my senior essay. Obviously, that system was color-coded!
—Erin Martell (A98)

"Tolstoy wrote that 'Russia and hot weather don't go together,' and it was a harsh winter in Santa Fe the first time I read *War and Peace*. I slogged through the snow and slush two nights a week to attend my preceptorial on the novel."

—Wint Huskey (SFGI10)

Contributors

Behind the Lens:

Anyi Guo (A14)

"I like revealing things to people that they don't know," says Anyi Guo (A14). "Sometimes they don't know how beautiful they are." Guo prefers dramatic portraits to poses and finds that she captures the moment best when the subject is relaxed, allowing their personality to shine. "It helps when you genuinely like the person because I believe that a picture reflects how you—the photographer—really think of them," she says. Her lively images of student life appear throughout *The College* magazine, in a 2011 yearbook she created, and in other print and digital publications.

Guo favors film photography over digital. "The process is very slow, so you can't see what you just took," she says. "It's almost like a Christmas gift when you look at the

film and think, 'I don't remember taking that.'" Yet she doesn't eschew digital photography entirely. "I love that [digital photography] captures every moment, and by just pressing the button, one of [the photos] will eventually come out right," says Guo. "That's the trick to digital photography—a bit of patience and a bit of luck."

Not much of a gear head, Guo keeps it simple. She uses a Pentax K-5 digital single-lens reflex, an entry-to-middle-level DSLR that's "not really professional, but it's good enough for the work that I do." She uses only two lenses: one for portraits and another for everything else. "Good lenses are expensive," she says. "They cost around \$3,000, while my camera only cost \$300. But what can I say? Photography is more about the eyes than the equipment."

—Nutchapol Boonparlit (A14)



From the Bell Towers

The Spirit of Poetry

Although N. Scott Momaday is best known as a novelist—his first novel, *House Made of Dawn*, won the Pulitzer Prize for fiction in 1969—poetry is his most abiding love. He is also a visual artist and was appointed artist-in-residence on the Santa Fe campus in April. Of Kiowa-Cherokee heritage, Momaday was raised first on the Kiowa Indian Reservation in Oklahoma and then in Arizona, where he was exposed to the Navajo, Apache, and Pueblo Indian cultures of the Southwest. After graduating from the University of New Mexico, he won a poetry fellowship to Stanford University’s Creative Writing program and earned a doctorate in English literature in 1963. Momaday has received numerous awards, including the National Medal of Arts.



TERI THOMSON RANDALL

When did you start writing poetry?

I started thinking of myself as a poet when I was just a child. My mother was a writer; I followed in her footsteps. I watched her work and she read to me. There were always books in the house that were inspiring to me that led me to become a writer.

What compels you to write a poem now? How do you go about writing a poem?

Poetry is the highest expression in language. It’s my goal to be as responsible in language as I can be and that leads me directly to poetry, the crown of literature. I try to find an idea that I want to explore in poetry and then I work it out mostly in terms of traditional English forms. I do a lot of traditional work in iambic pentameter, but I also write free verse (a contradiction in terms). I like prose poems, short, lyrical pieces that are not written in free verse but in a kind of free style. My most recent poem is “The Sake of Appearance.” I was interested in the idea that nothing—nothingness—is an important concept. I composed a poem of about nine lines; it’s written in iambic pentameter with a definite rhyme scheme. That’s how a poem comes about:

you have an idea and put the idea into the highest possible expression.

Can you describe the work you’re doing as artist-in-residence?

I meet with students every two weeks or so. I assign a poem to read or a painting to study and we have a discussion. It’s a wonderful exercise in the seminar form and I’m delighted with the students I’ve encountered here. I look forward to continuing in this post for a good, long while. Some of the works we have discussed are “The Snow Man” by Wallace Stevens, “Poem in October” by Dylan Thomas, Peter Brueghel’s “Hunter in the Snow,” and Munch’s “Cry” and “The Red Vine.”

Is talking about a painting similar to talking about a poem?

They are different expressions of the spirit. A poem is composed in language as we understand the term. A painting is vivid and uses visual expression, so they’re worlds apart in many ways. But you can talk about them in the same terms: What is on the poet’s or painter’s mind? How does he realize his vision? What are the techniques he uses to convey his expression? How does he communicate his spirit?

“It’s my goal to be as responsible in language as I can be and that leads me directly to poetry, the crown of literature.”

N. Scott Momaday

How did you develop an interest in painting?

My father was a noted Native American painter, so I watched him work when I was growing up. I didn’t want to be a painter at that time; it was not until I was well into my adulthood that I began painting and drawing and making prints.

What is your goal in working with St. John’s students?

I’m trying to give the students the benefit of my experience as an artist and to share with them something of the oral tradition. St. John’s students can benefit from it because oral tradition is very powerful. The best expression we have of it is theater: You go to a production of *Hamlet* and you see oral tradition in the raw, people speaking

to each other on the stage and giving meaning and expression through voice and body language in the way you don't find in the pages in a book. It's a welcome addition to reading.

Does your new position mark a change in your relationship with St. John's?

I have been associated with St. John's College for some time in different ways. I've given the Commencement address, delivered public lectures, and [Mike Peters], the president in Santa Fe, is a good friend. I'm pleased to have a relationship with the college; I think the world of it and want to keep my ties to it alive. This is [my] first chance to meet with students in a discussion situation. I've had a whole career of teaching in large institutions. I taught at Stanford [and] other colleges, and I find that St. John's students probably have a greater freedom of thought than students have elsewhere. Being exposed to great books is wonderful and I want to know more about that process, how it works having such close association with the greatest thinkers of the human experience. That's not something you can say about most places. ☐

— Interview by Susan Borden (A87)

"Earth and I Gave You Turquoise" is the first poem Momaday kept, written when he was an undergraduate.

Earth and I Gave You Turquoise

Earth and I gave you turquoise
when you walked singing
We lived laughing in my house
and told old stories
You grew ill when the owl cried
We will meet on Black Mountain

I will bring corn for planting
and we will make fire
Children will come to your breast
You will heal my heart
I speak your name many times
The wild cane remembers you

PHENOMENAL POEM

Poems were popping up everywhere on the Annapolis campus on April 24—National Poem in Your Pocket Day. Since 1996, April has been National Poetry Month, started by the Academy of American Poets to celebrate poetry. In 2008, the Academy made New York City's Poem in Your Pocket Day a national event; several students read about it in the *Gadfly*. There were poems taped on walls and placed on tables in the Mellon fishbowl. Chinese poems had accompanying English translations. A Chilean poem was posted on a student's Facebook wall. Students pulled iPhones from their pockets to read poems aloud.

In a Mellon science lab, a poem moved several students to tears—and joy. Tutor Patricia Locke had previously agreed that the student who came up with a name that everyone agreed to adopt for the "Faraday Machine" would be exempt from the end-of-the-year paper. Alexandra Wick (A15) thought of a name, "Revolution Within an Electric Embrace," that was also a poem: "I didn't have any confidence that I could win it with a name alone, so I decided to write a poem and appeal to the end-of-the-year nostalgia," says Wick. When she learned that it was also Poem in Your Pocket Day, she found it a perfect convergence of forces.

It was not the first time Wick had read a poem in lab class. "I really like the junior year because of the holistic experience of math, lab, and seminar. Ms. Locke has prepped us to see lab this way; she has brought in poems about the experience of bursting into tears and what kind of phenomenon it is, or a video of birds flying in what looks like magnetic lines of force. So we've been primed by her to see science as poetry, and poetry as science; I like that transitive property of phenomena."

When it was Wick's turn, she read "Revolution Within an Electric Embrace," her original two-page poem. "I've been thinking about all these things throughout the year, and I put them into rhyming couplet form." In the machine, she sees the force that she learned about from Newton:

*"If attractive force spins the planets above,
Why not be simple and just call it love?
Then force is love and love is God,
And the world's a stage on which we've all
starred."*

And the motion of the machine reminds her of Phèdre's struggle:

*"This embrace, though stable,
can never be at rest—
The wire cannot linger and put its head on
electric's chest.
Here the wire reminds me of Phèdre herself,
longing to clutch.
Her passion hovers about Hippolyte but never
allowed to touch."*

By the end of the reading, everyone agreed they had a winner. Locke modified the assignment and gave students the option of writing a poem instead of the paper. Whether handwritten on paper or read from an iPhone, Locke says, "the whole idea is to encourage people to start reading poems and realize that they do have poems in their pockets at all times, and have it be more part of their daily life. I like poetry because it seems to be the most intensified language we have. It has meaning on multiple levels that act with each other and it really is an entity itself. It's not just pointing to something else; it is its own being."

— Eunji Kim (A15)

My young brother's house is filled
I go there to sing
We have not spoken of you
but our songs are sad
When Moon Woman goes to you
I will follow her white way
Tonight they dance near Chinle
by the seven elms
There your loom whispered beauty
They will eat mutton
and drink coffee till morning
You and I will not be there

I saw a crow by Red Rock
standing on one leg
It was the black of your hair
The years are heavy
I will ride the swiftest horse
You will hear the drumming hooves

BRIEFLY QUOTED

*"The uniqueness and glory
of St. John's is not about the
outside world or our next steps,
it is about a life absorbed and
obsessed with books, ideas, and
the importance of those who
thought and wrote before us.
But the question remains, even if
unspoken, 'What are we going to
do, and from your perspective as
a graduate, why?'"*

JOHN L. GRAY (EC12),
director, National Museum of American
History, Smithsonian Institution,
2014 Commencement speaker, Santa Fe

POEMS FROM THE HEART

Alexandra Welm's (A14) first publication, *My Eden Home* (Alondra Press, 2013), is a collection of poems accompanied by her illustrations, completed when she was 19 years old. Putting the book together, she says, "was as close as I could possibly feel to having a baby." Having worked with magazines in high school, she downloaded a layout program and positioned the poems and art. "It was so entirely my own; I've never had anything like this that's mine. When I realized it was actually going somewhere, I could hardly believe it."

Welm loves fiction, but poetry has always been a more accessible medium for her. "I loved dabbling in other people's stories; I loved writing extensions to them and exploring what my favorite characters did, but I don't have an expansive enough imagination to make my own stories. Poetry was something I felt I could always tap into."

My Eden Home is not only the title of the book, it is also the title of a poem that Welm cherishes. "I wrote it after my father passed away and it felt powerful to me," she says. "It seemed to say everything I wanted to say about an event which otherwise I simply couldn't put into words."

Welm believes in the storytelling power of poetry. "It allows both the reader and the writer to experience powerful emotions in a condensed space," she says. "What would take many chapters in a book, you feel instantly with a poem. You feel great loss, great pain, great love. And it washes over you immediately in just a couple of lines."

— Eunji Kim (A15)

To read these poems in full visit: www.sjc.edu/news-and-media



Alexandra Welm (A14)



Joshua Sturgill (SF17)

BOOKSTORE POET

Joshua Sturgill (SF17) doesn't call himself a poet. The oldest freshman on the Santa Fe campus, Sturgill, 37, worked in a bookstore in Kansas for 10 years while keeping a journal and writing essays and reviews about literature and philosophy. Many of his journal entries were fragments and impressions—poetic and otherwise—recorded for future reference; some he turned into poems.

When *Muse Times Two*, a poetry series in Santa Fe sponsored by the nonprofit organization Lore of the Land, announced its first annual competition for local college students, Sturgill decided to work with the notes he took during Holy Week in 2013. The result: a three-part poem called "The Narrow Year" was selected as the winner for St. John's.

On Sunday, April 13, Sturgill read his poem at Collected Works Bookstore and Coffeehouse, in a lineup that included the winners from the other colleges in town—Santa Fe University of Art and Design, the Institute for American Indian Arts, and Santa Fe Community College. Each school was asked to submit poems by three students; the *Muse Times Two* jury selected one winner from each institution.

"I'm an Orthodox Christian and Holy Week is a really intense time—lots of services but also a meditative period," says Sturgill. "I wrote about events from last year and it's interesting that one year later, I read my poem on Palm Sunday."

Sturgill's winning three-part poem traces a challenging yearlong journey that culminates in this verse, a resurrection of hope:

3.
I drank an ode
this morning: sunlight
standing in a cup of tea. I saw the leaves
unfold a solemn reflection
of life, lending the water
green memory. Imperceptibly (except
by intuition) the cup pulses, rings, to my pulse
and I hold myself uncoiling
from a point of concentrated hope—there!
that hint of rainbow! rising
in an angle of the steam

— Jennifer Levin

Alumnus and Tutor
Co-direct NEH
Summer Institute

Joshua Parens (A84) and Joseph Macfarland (A87) are co-directing the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) Summer Institute on Medieval Political Philosophy, from June 16 to July 11, 2014, at Gonzaga University in Spokane, Washington. Parens is dean of the Braniff Graduate School of Liberal Arts and a professor of philosophy at the University of Dallas; Macfarland is a tutor in Annapolis. They are co-directing the Institute with Douglas Kries, professor of Christian philosophy at Gonzaga.

The Summer Institute is intended to address the relative neglect of medieval political philosophy in undergraduate education (compared to ancient and modern thought), and more specifically, the relative neglect of Islamic and Jewish medieval thought.

Examining writings by Alfarabi, Maimonides, Thomas Aquinas, and many others, participating faculty and graduate students will be able to rediscover and contemplate the confrontation between reason and revelation free from many modern presuppositions.

It is hoped that the 25 participants from colleges and universities across the country will subsequently incorporate medieval political philosophy into their courses.

Learn more about the Institute: <http://medievalpoliticalphilosophy.gonzaga.edu>

BRIEFLY QUOTED

"We are stories, each of us
an imagination, each of us
tracing an arc of beginning,
middle, and end, on the
course of which each of us
must struggle..."

National Book Award finalist
ANDREW KRIVAK (A86),
2014 Commencement speaker,
Annapolis

Lunch with Anna Karenina

“Reading *Anna Karenina* might well take time, but it is time very joyously spent,” says Annapolis tutor Brendan Boyle, who was part of a yearlong study group on the Tolstoy novel. Although Tolstoy’s *War and Peace* has been read by Johnnies since the inception of the New Program, *Anna Karenina* is usually relegated to preceptorials and post-graduation reading. It is clearly worth the community’s attention. Dostoevsky called it “flawless as a work of art” and Faulkner said it was the best novel ever written.

The study group, made up of faculty, staff, students, and other community members, met at lunchtime for 15 Mondays throughout the year, reading roughly 50 pages for each session. Participants looked forward with “delight” to each reading, Boyle reports, as they followed married aristocrat Anna’s struggle with questions of marriage, passion, society and her affair with Count Vronsky.

Annapolis President Chris Nelson (SF70) launched the study group nine years ago out of a desire to stay in touch with what he calls “the real work of the college.” In the early years of his presidency, he often led undergraduate seminars. When his job became more demanding, tutor Debbie Axelrod became the group’s co-leader. They began with short fiction but have recently been reading long works including *War and Peace* and *Ulysses*.

Axelrod says that *Anna Karenina* shows Tolstoy’s great sense for human emotion and interaction: “Tolstoy *gets it*,” she says. “When he describes what a person is feeling or how a relationship is unfolding, so many times he writes exactly what they would say, exactly what they would feel.”

Nelson agrees. “Tolstoy seems to create a character who behaves in a certain way, but these characters are complex,” he says. “Just when I think: ‘Well, they fit that mold,’ it turns out they don’t. And that’s true of every character in this book.”

Sophomore William Brown (A16) believes that this surprise is part of a



ANYI GUO (A14)

“Tolstoy seems to create a character who behaves in a certain way, but these characters are complex. Just when I think: ‘Well, they fit that mold,’ it turns out they don’t. And that’s true of every one of the characters in this book.”

Chris Nelson (SF70), Annapolis president

narrative ambiguity that is characteristic of Tolstoy. “In *Anna Karenina*, Tolstoy often writes in a style that suggests he shares opinions with the characters when he is writing about them, but then it changes when he’s talking about different characters.” Brown sees an interesting technique throughout the book: “There’s a way that the characters infect the narrative and the narration becomes much less certain as a result,” he says. “That’s one of the things I find myself most interested in.”

Linda Tuck, wife of retired tutor Jon Tuck, joined the group this year after retiring from a career as an elementary

school librarian in Anne Arundel County. She notes that one of the strengths of the group is the variety of people participating: staff, undergraduates, GLs, retired tutors, current tutors, and other members of the community. Often, she says, the chemistry of the group is working so well that she holds back from participating. “Lots of times the discussion is so lively that I’ll have things I want to say and I don’t say them because the conversation is going and it’s wonderful to listen to,” says Tuck.

Boyle agrees that the participants work extraordinarily well together. “The group itself is, I think, a model of humanistic investigation,” he says. “If one takes a class on Tolstoy or, say, Dostoevsky, it will invariably be occupied with questions about political, economic, and cultural developments in late 19th-century Russia. The works themselves have a tendency to get lost. Our seminar, by contrast, allows the book to question us about love, marriage, children, happiness, God. ‘Why might Anna love him?’ ‘What would a free life look like for Anna, for Vronsky, for Levin, for us?’ In our seminar, that’s what we’re trying to figure out. As, I think, Tolstoy himself was.”

—Eunji Kim (A15)

THE MIRACLE OF FILM

BY DOMENIC D'ANDREA (A15)

I applied to St. John's not because I wanted to be a filmmaker but because I wanted the films that I made to be *for* something great. This is what I told those who said, "Aren't you a film major?" "But there's no film department?" "But wait—philosophy?" In truth, the real reason I applied is that I was insecure at parties, decidedly unable to hold my own (read: to sound "smart") when stuck at the punch bowl with a friendly stranger.

I came to St. John's because I wanted to learn how to hold a conversation. I knew that depended on my ability to think well and deeply, and to collaborate—a concept with which I was familiar, but practiced little. None of my adolescent friends were terribly interested in making movies, so the films that I made were almost always solo projects. To make a truly good film is to find some collaborative center of gravity, some harmonization of all its parts. If a film, miraculously, turns out to be good—and a good film, regardless of the individual talent involved, must always be a miracle—then it is both everyone's and no one's fault.

Toward the end of my freshman year, some friends and I made a short half-narrative, half-documentary film, *And for My Next Trick*. It was about an eccentric freshman who was with us for a few months before he abruptly disappeared, leaving behind most of his possessions and a cryptic message scribbled in dark-purple sharpie on his dorm-room wall. The movie premiered during "Dead Week," and a surprising number of students—about 50—showed up.

We tried to make it funny. A lot of people laughed, and reportedly, some cried. I say this not to congratulate myself (although I will occasionally re-watch the film's frankly awesome and climactic swing-dance-turned-fight-scene), but rather to note that the movie united my class in a way that was meaningful and unexpected. Without realizing it, we had told a story about the caricatured versions



PHOTOS: ANYI GUO (A14)

SOMEWHERE ALONG THE WAY, WE TOLD OURSELVES THAT STORYTELLING MATTERS, THAT IT MEANS SOMETHING AND OUGHT TO BE DONE BY PEOPLE WHO WANT TO MAKE OTHER PEOPLE FEEL A LITTLE BIT LESS ALONE.

of ourselves to which we cling when thrust into a new community. We'd made a movie about how it felt to be a freshman. As I sat in the projection booth and the crowd below me laughed, I knew that with this clumsily shot and hastily edited movie, I had struck that fine chord between the Bitter and the Sweet of something true.

A few days after the screening, one Very Cool Upperclassman told me, "Film is the culmination of the liberal arts, a marriage of visual art and narrative and music and dialectic and philosophy—all unfolding in time." This is true, but what I like about film is that it is an expression of the visible. There must be something real before the lens of a camera. And that something begs to be seen both for what it is—the light through a tree or the subtle crack of a smile—and for how it fits into a greater narrative: that tree the place where a painful longing first was felt, that smile a hint of mirth during an argument between two old but not close friends. Is this any different from poetry or theater or music? We experience and repurpose things to tell stories. We know this. We do it all the time, but film reaches the places that words struggle to touch.

This is why a coherent film—not necessarily a good or great film—is a miracle. This statement is a slightly pretentious



way of saying that a good story—be it visual or musical or spatial or all of the aforementioned at once—requires a whole lot of work and collaboration. I don't just mean collaboration between myself and the audi-

ence or myself and the crew, but between myself and the film's subject matter. For this reason, film is not just a liberal arts thing or a conversational thing. It's a tender thing. More accurately, it's a trusting thing. That is why I like film so much.

At the Annapolis Film Festival last year, I heard this sentiment articulated by Albert Maysles during a screening of his acclaimed documentary, *Gimme Shelter*. "If when you're making a film you're not trying to make friends," he said, "then I don't really know why you're making that film."

I'm happiest when I'm chasing a moment with a steadicam, with a few friends and a small window of time to get a shot "in the can" before the sun sets, or before that ominous storm cloud eats it whole. Make no mistake: this description is romantic because it has to be. In truth, setting up a scene is arduous. The amount of time it takes to shoot something is typically quadruple the duration of the final result. I've talked here mostly about the "making" because it is the "telling" of storytelling that interests me. In the telling—that is, in the making, in the long nights of editing hours of footage with some faithful friends and a big bag of candy, a filmmaker anticipates how the story will be seen and understood. Somewhere along the way, we told ourselves that storytelling matters, that it means something and ought to be done by people who want to make other people feel a little bit less alone. And if we get good at making things together, odds are we're doing something right.

View Domenic D'Andrea's (A15) films at www.vimeo.com/domdandrea.

OFF THE WALL

GIMME FIVE

The virtual world was buzzing with comments from students, alumni, and parents in response to Annapolis President Chris Nelson's SignPosts blog, "Five Reasons to Attend St. John's College": www.sjc-christopherbnelson.com

"I am a parent of a sophomore, and whenever I have to describe the kind of college my daughter attends, my short pitch default answer is always this: 'Every single kid going to this school is incredibly employable when they come out. Because every day, in every class, they have to fully participate in their own learning, thinking, and defending their understanding of something. Most important, they have to do it with respect for every other person in the room.'"

—Lisa, St. John's parent

"As a fellow parent, I am simply amazed at the level of maturity and thoughtfulness that my 19-year-old son has demonstrated since being here a little over one semester! It is hard to believe how much growth he has realized in such a short time. Not to mention him literally telling me—for the first time in his life—that 'I've fallen in love with a man who has been dead for 2,089 years—Euclid! I really love math.'"

—Anonymous parent

"Is no degree better than a liberal arts degree?" is a new study published on *Forbes.com* in May that considers millennials (born between the early '80s and the early 2000s).

"The only ones who could find this study, its premises and findings, to be valid are those who have not been trained in critical thinking."

—Caroline Killian (SF05)

"If your sole aim is to get well paying jobs, and you have no interest in meaning, thoughtful reflection, or understanding of different worldviews, then focusing solely on money makes sense. To those who desire a thoughtful life, a life better prepared for all of the interesting twists and turns, our college motto makes the case."

—Anonymous alum



A still from *Nosferatu*, F.W. Murnau's 1922 film.

READING GREAT FILMS

Moved by the power and beauty of early cinema, Scott Buchanan once envisioned the New Program with a fifth year devoted to the study of great cinematic works. More than 75 years later, this summer marks the arrival of the St. John's College Film Institute (June 15 to August 8) at the Santa Fe campus. Several alumni, including Hannah Jayanti (SF07) and Bob Tzudiker (A75) are leading workshops. An idea spawned by Santa Fe Graduate Institute Director David Carl and other film-minded tutors at the Santa Fe campus, the Film Institute emphasizes reading films as well as viewing them; it includes seminars, tutorials, and workshops with film professionals. "A great film has to work on multiple levels, with many possible interpretations," says Carl. "It has to exceed the artist's intentions and provide a forum in which [audiences] can engage serious questions."

Local theater groups are showing films on large screens at venues throughout the city. Films include: F. W. Murnau's *Nosferatu* (1922), Yasujiro Ozu's *Tokyo Story* (1953), John Ford's *Stagecoach* (1939), Ingmar Bergman's *Wild Strawberries* (1957), and Andrei Tarkovsky's *Mirror* (1975), among others. Each week focuses on films by a different director as well as books that either they or critics have written about their work. "Like poetry, a director or cinematographer is very deliberate about what we see," says Carl. "Images are inseparable from the story."

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Ariel Intern Finds Order and Purpose

In July 2014, the Laboratory of Anthropology (LOA) Research Library at the Museum of Indian Arts and Culture on the piñon-studded Museum Hill in Santa Fe will migrate its catalog to the Koha Integrated Library System, a move that will make the library records searchable on the Internet for the first time.

Helping to facilitate the migration is Elizabeth Fedden (SF15), who was awarded a second Ariel Internship to work for LOA Library Director Allison Colborne. Fedden started working at the library in fall 2012 when she helped with a book sale to



Elizabeth Fedden (SF15)

raise funds. She continued to work with Colborne on other projects; when Fedden learned about the database migration project, she applied for the Ariel Internship to fund the work. "I'm not very tech-savvy, and it was a good opportunity to work more with computers," says Fedden.

Fedden, 29, a native of Normal, Illinois, came to St. John's after serving as a U.S. Army nurse at the Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C. She then spent five years working in cafés, becoming a competitive barista, and volunteering at the World Barista Championship in Bogotá, Colombia. She eventually came to realize that in order to move beyond the espresso machine, she needed a college degree.

At first, the LOA Library database cleanup was overwhelming—detailed and often tedious—moving authors' names and book titles into the correct fields, deleting



ANYI GUO (A14)

PROGRAM PAGE TURNERS

Is there a work of fiction or storytelling on the Program that you find to be especially compelling?

"My favorite narrative on the program is *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* because the language of the story transcends the story itself. Its cadence and rhythm become the central characters."

— Josh Kelly (SF15)

"Herodotus's *Histories*. I find the best way to learn about people is through actual actions. I think it is easier to learn about people, philosophy, virtue, and anything through actual human actions."

— Sally Jankovic (A17)

"One of my favorite narratives so far has been *Don Quixote*. I can identify with someone who sees all around him what he needs in order for the outer world to match his inner world."

— Joseph Leakakos (SF15)

"As *You Like It*, because the hero is a woman, and it is hilarious to watch [the characters] run around the forest and pretend they know what's going on when no one really understands."

— Caroline Snizek (A15)

"I love the *Iliad*. It was the first book we read here during freshman year and I remember being enthralled by it. It is so exciting—tales of glory and the gods. I have two copies in my room, a Lattimore and a Fitzgerald translation. I plan on rereading them both this summer."

— William Kinum (A17)

"The thing that really moved me was both of the Euripides plays. But I would choose the *Bacchae* because it is so sensual and violent at the same time. It's a very disturbing combination and unlike anything else on the Program [so far]. It certainly leads to a very interesting discussion. I'm still not sure what it's about, but it was definitely compelling."

— Collin Ziegler (A17)

or merging duplicate records, running into the stacks to confirm the location of an obscure holding, and making sure records are precise. "If periods aren't in the right places, the record won't come up," says Fedden, who is exploring a master's program at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign; she is particularly interested

in library conservation, digitizing fragile materials, and making them searchable.

Colborne calls Fedden a librarian in the making. "I've had other interns, and you can just tell," says Colborne. "I never have to explain things to her. She understands the order and the purpose." □

—Jennifer Levin

Return to the Novel

Spurred by Henry Robert (Class of 1941), this spring the Annapolis alumni chapter, headed by Beth Martin (A94), formed a study group to read the Pevear and Volokhonsky translation of *War and Peace*. Erin Fitzpatrick (A14) met with participant Sam Kutler (Class of 1954), retired tutor and dean emeritus, to discuss Tolstoy's great work.

How many times have you read *War and Peace*?

I've read it more than four times. As many senior seminars as I've done, I've read it at least that many times. The small things get changed because you've forgotten exactly where they are, but you know where the large movements are; you know what's coming.

Is there a particular scene or line that has stayed with you?

When Pierre speaks to Andrei and says, "You gave such a beautiful talk about forgiveness. This is the time to forgive Natasha." And Andrei says, "I never said I could do it." He's too proud. That's a very important part of the novel. Tolstoy says "this is not a novel," but he's wrong.

People have often described Tolstoy's novels as "character driven." Do you agree?

Tolstoy wants *War and Peace* to be history driven, but the book is character driven. Many years after reading *War and Peace*, fine memories of Natasha, Pierre, and all the other characters linger. I cherish most Pierre's statement to Andrei about forgiving Natasha. Pierre was always in love with Natasha, even when she was a child, and he would have given anything to be in Andrei's shoes so he could have forgiven her. That would have been the greatest act of his life. I've always thought about that business about forgiveness.

Do you have a favorite character in the novel?

I'll tell you a story instead of answering that question. I think the Program was

made solid by Jacob Klein. I went to Mr. Klein's seminar before I joined the faculty in '61. He went around the room and asked every single person, "What is *War and Peace* about?" When he'd finished, he said, "You're all wrong. It's about Natasha." Tolstoy doesn't mind repeating the same phrase. He wants to drive it home the way Beethoven does. He's a very musical writer. The main problem for me is thinking of what a strange couple Prince Andrei and Natasha would be. He's so stern and unusual and half of him is his father. A little bit like *Hamlet* in that respect. I don't know if that had any effect on Tolstoy.

Tolstoy doesn't mind repeating the same phrase. He wants to drive it home the way Beethoven does. He's a very musical writer.

How would you compare *Anna Karenina* to *War and Peace*?

I recognize it as a masterpiece. I can't find time to read it often, nor can I compare the two novels, for they are so different. *War and Peace* is dear to my heart because of the well-drawn characters and because Tolstoy is anxious to disabuse us of our false notions about war.

How can we find joy in reading an assigned book?

The list of books on the Program is so good that I always delight in reading any of them, even if not especially Adam Smith. I would have found it hard, year after year, to do Justinian—we used to read Justinian on how the Romans freed their slaves. It was a bit tedious. We got rid of books like that when we started the preceptorial list. There's hardly anything that isn't a delight

to read. I wince a bit with Tacitus. I enjoy the freshman and sophomore readings more than those of the junior and senior year. They seem more plausible and richer. But the last time I did the junior year, I thought they were strange books and very well chosen. Every time I reread a book, it was a new adventure, and every time I did it in seminar, it was never the same. People were always interested in talking about different things.

Why should we read *War and Peace*?

We should read it because of its extreme richness. I love its repetitions, I love that everything's there on the surface, but



the surface is so huge. The hard part is to integrate it all in your imagination. Seminars are very helpful because somebody will speak who has an entirely different way of looking at it. Every single time I've read it, it got better. That's one test of a great book: its "rereadability." □

—Interview by Erin Fitzpatrick (A14)

Plants and Psychology: Hodson Intern Finds the Link



ANYI GUO (A14)

Working at Talmar Gardens in Baltimore, Maryland, last summer was the perfect first internship for Rachel Howell (A16). Talmar Gardens is a nonprofit organization that provides horticultural therapy, which uses plants and horticultural activities to assist in improving one's body, mind, and spirit. Howell turned to horticultural therapy in hopes of merging two of her interests: psychology and nature. "The brain is an amazing thing," she says. Growing up on a small farm surrounded by gardens and animals nurtured her love of nature and working with plants. At Talmar Gardens, Howell interned in a vocational program in which students with mental disabilities learn a horticultural trade. "It involved working out in the field, transplanting plants in the greenhouse, and showing the students how to use the tools and how to work with others."

Howell's Hodson internship helped her refine her interest in horticultural therapy and exposed her to expectations of the work world. "Class will go on without [me], but if I'm not there [at my job], they're going to have a problem getting the group going," she says. She sought

to develop leadership and communication skills through the internship, taking charge of her assigned group of students and learning to communicate clearly. "I had to be direct, lay everything out, and be specific when I was talking to the students." This experience complemented the communication skills that she has been developing at St. John's College. "I also learned patience," she says, "from dealing with things like rush-hour traffic to working with students with mental disabilities."

Howell did not receive much instruction on how to work with the students, so she learned on the job "by watching what other people did. We would have meetings once a week about the students. We talked about their progress and I would ask questions: 'This happened, this is how I dealt with it. Is there a better way to deal with it?'" The most fulfilling moment was at the end, when her group graduated from the vocational training program. "I was so proud of them and happy to see them be proud of themselves for what they had accomplished. I was really glad to have had a part in it."

— Eunji Kim (A15)

CHILDREN'S LITERACY ADVOCATE

Joanna Purpich (A14) takes the idea of "find a need and fill it" to heart. While volunteering as a math and reading coach for elementary and middle school students this past year at the Bloomsbury Square Community Center in Annapolis, Purpich discovered that the organization's supply of children's books needed a serious boost. An avid reader and advocate for children's literacy, she sprung to action. On April 9, she launched a children's book drive on the Paca quad, inviting the college community to donate new and gently used books, primarily for ages 7 to 14. She collected more than 200 books, including classics such as Roald Dahl's *Matilda*, Rudyard Kipling's *The Jungle Book*, and Anne McCaffrey's *The Coelura*. "The drive was a success," says Purpich. "Being a community of book lovers, St. John's is a great place to do a book drive."

The following day, Purpich delivered the books to the community center. "The kids were excited to see the boxes. We sat in a circle and read Shel Silverstein poems." Purpich is looking forward to organizing another children's book drive. "I want to make sure teachers have tools to effectively reach students." Purpich hopes to forge a career in publishing; this summer she is attending the University of Denver Summer Publishing Institute.



ANYI GUO (A14)

Purpich was raised on classics by Roald Dahl and Tolkien. "My favorite was *The Hobbit*." Growing up in Houston, Texas, her parents encouraged reading. "For a bedtime story, my mom read *Don Quixote* to me. I felt comfortable with epics and books with cool plotlines." One book, in particular, she holds dear to this day. "I keep a copy of *Harry Potter*, to comfort me when I'm sick or not feeling well," says Purpich. "My original copy is missing its spine and completely worn out from use—and from being dropped in the bathtub."

— Gregory Shook

Hitting the Global Airwaves



Pictured (left to right): Linda Lin, co-op producer, U.S. Department of State; Maria Acosta, Teleamazonas reporter; Francisca Soto Bravo (A17); Edison Choco, Teleamazonas cameraman

St. John's College garnered international attention when television documentary film crews visited the Annapolis campus last fall. They traveled to the U.S. on separate assignments, but with a similar interest: discussion-based higher education. A noted television journalist, producer, and camera crew from the Korean Educational Broadcasting System (EBS), one of the leading networks in Korea, visited in October. In a partnership with the U.S. Department of State, a similar team from Teleamazonas, a major television network in Ecuador, arrived in November. Both news teams immersed themselves in campus life: they met with students, faculty, and staff, and attended seminars, labs, and concerts. They were especially interested in the college's emphasis on original sources and classroom discussion. Each news team noted the heightened interest among youth in their respective countries in studying classic works and perfecting conversational English. Among the students who participated in the documentaries were JuChan Park (A16) from Korea, and Francisca Soto Bravo (A17) from Chile; they shared their experiences as international students at the college.

TALK OF THE TOWERS

In Annapolis, four new tutors have joined the faculty. **Robert Abbott** (Ao4) is from the University of Chicago, where he is working on completing his joint PhD from the Committee on Social Thought and the Department of Germanic Studies. **Karin Ekholm** (Aoo) joined the college from the University of Cambridge, where she was a teaching and research fellow in the Department of History and Philosophy of Science. She received her PhD in history and philosophy of science from Indiana University. **Rebecca Goldner** (AGIo2) comes to the college from Villanova University, where she earned her PhD in philosophy. **Matthew Holtzman** (Aoo) earned his PhD in philosophy from Johns Hopkins University.

In Santa Fe, **Mary Anne Burke** is the new Facilities and Athletics manager, and **Aaron Young** is the new director of Human Resources. **Chris Gruber** is the new Webmaster, and **Lisa Neal** is assistant director of Communications. In Annapolis, several new directors have joined the college: **Bill Hocking**, director for the President's Initiative for a Liberal Education; **Tim Leahy**, director of Information Technology; and **Susan Jenkins**, director of Web Initiatives and Social Media. Annapolis Treasurer **Bronte Jones** left the college in September; **Bud Billups**, interim treasurer, retires (again) this summer.

LARRY CLENDENIN (SF77) RETIRES

After nearly three decades as admissions director on the Santa Fe campus, Larry Clendenin (SF77) officially retired in July. "Every student who has signed the college register at Convocation over these years, and therefore every student who has received a diploma at Commencement for most of those years, owes something to Larry's work," says J. Walter Sterling, Santa Fe dean. "I am deeply grateful for his service to the college."

During the last 30 years, Clendenin has witnessed tremendous changes in higher education, particularly in the ways that colleges and universities reach out to prospective students. "What is really different is the communication—the connectivity and mediums that are available to us," says Clendenin. "That really pushes on our lives and on our private time, and opens up more public avenues. But young people keep up with it." Clendenin has also seen the cost of higher education rise,



Santa Fe Admissions staff and Larry Clendenin

which he says can be "overwhelming for a lot of families. St. John's is doing a good job of addressing that. One thing I tell parents is that our graduates go on to write great literature, make movies, and become businesspeople, doctors, lawyers, and teachers."

Clendenin emphasizes that St. John's is about finding the right fit. "We're talking about a particular student and whether or not it's going to be practical," says Clendenin. "It's not a question of whether it's practical for all students. But for those of us for whom this is perfect, it brings out the best in us. It brings out great things that take us where we want to go."

—Jennifer Levin

Santa Fe Campus Turns 50

This summer, St. John's College kicks off the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Santa Fe campus. The yearlong celebration includes activities and events that will recognize and honor the people and the community that make St. John's in Santa Fe so distinctive. "This year marks a significant milestone in the history of the college and the Santa Fe campus, conclusively demonstrating for more than 50 years that the St. John's Program is an education for all and has no geographical or cultural bounds," says Santa Fe President Mike Peters.

THE ST. JOHN'S EDUCATION IS FOREVER YOUNG. THE PIONEERS, THE WESTERN COLONY, THE ODYSSEAN WANDERING, WERE—AND ARE—IMPLICIT IN THE GENETIC MAKEUP OF THE PROGRAM.



Richard Weigle, founder and president of the Santa Fe campus

It was a bold and visionary move to establish a campus in Santa Fe, offering the college's unique, and in many ways radical, academic program to more students. "The founding of the Santa Fe campus in 1964 was a reminder that the educational program installed in Annapolis in 1937—one that could be mistaken for something traditional, if not hidebound—is in fact radical, volatile, and nomadic," says J. Walter Sterling, Santa Fe dean. "As was said of the

Greeks, the St. John's education is forever young. The pioneers, the Western colony, the Odyssean wandering, were—and are—implicit in the genetic makeup of the Program, waiting to be expressed."

The commemoration of 50 years in Santa Fe "gives us a perfect opportunity to highlight the significant place that the college has in higher education, reaffirm together our core values as a community, and heighten the visibility of St. John's locally and nationally," says Victoria Mora, Santa Fe vice president. "It also is important for Santa Fe to step up and leverage gifts to the campus in honor of the anniversary, making us a stronger partner in our one college, two campus structure." The college also will salute innovations first established in Santa Fe—such as the Graduate Institute, the Eastern Classics program, and Summer Classics.

On June 20, a public media event launched the celebration with proclamations and remembrances. The campus is taking every opportunity to mark the anniversary throughout the summer, beginning with Music on the Hill, Summer Classics, and the first-ever Summer Film Institute (www.sjc.edu/events-and-programs/santa-fe/summer-film-institute). The celebration will continue throughout the academic year and will include a national academic conference, "What is Liberal Education For?" on October 16 through 18 (www.sjc.edu/events-and-programs/santa-fe/50th-anniversary-conference). The conference is envisioned as a broad platform to speak about the challenges and opportunities for liberal education today, and to engage in exemplary studies in the liberal arts.

Sterling reflects on the value of the conference and its place in the campus's 50th anniversary celebration: "Our insight into the true ends and appropriate means of an education for the human being as such suggests an alternative to what has sadly become mainstream and conventional. Such an education should be made available to, and pursued by, many more people—ever more people. This was audacious in Annapolis in 1937 and in Santa Fe in 1964, and seems more so now. But it happens to be true."

—Jennifer Levin

2013-2014 NEW BOARD MEMBERS



Elizabeth ("Betsy") Ann Bassan (A75) is founder, president, and CEO of Panagora Group, a woman-owned small business providing integrated and novel solutions in health and development. Previously she

held executive and leadership positions with Chemonics International, Save the Children, and the Society for International Development (SID)-Washington. She is a senior planner and management specialist with more than 30 years of experience designing, implementing, and evaluating international development projects, strengthening institutions, and building public-private partnerships. Her sector expertise includes global health and private sector development. Her regional experience includes Africa, Asia, Europe, Eurasia, and the Middle East. She lived and worked overseas for seven years in Kenya and Sudan. She speaks French and holds an M.A. from Columbia University, where she participated in a joint degree program on Planning in Developing Nations.



Robert Mass is head of Goldman Sachs's International Compliance, which comprises Europe, Middle East, and Africa (EMEA) and Asia Pacific Compliance. He is also global head of Securities Division Compliance.

He joined Goldman Sachs in 1992 as the first head of Compliance for the J. Aron Currency and Commodities Division. He managed FICC Compliance for eight years until 2004. He was named managing director in 2001 and partner in 2010. Prior to joining the firm, he was an assistant district attorney in New York County, where he served as deputy chief of the Investigation Division and chief of the Labor Racketeering Unit. Before that, he worked at Kramer, Levin, Nessen and Kamin, a New York corporate law firm, and at the American Civil Liberties Union. He is a graduate of the University of California, Santa Cruz, and Harvard Law School. Mass has participated in the New York Executive Seminars for many years, as well as in Summer Classics in Santa Fe.

Committed to Liberal Education



TONY J. PHOTOGRAPHY

Chris Nelson (SF70), Annapolis president

Last October, more than a dozen college and university presidents dined at the Penn Club in midtown Manhattan while fielding questions from a select group of editors, producers, and journalists—from CBS News, the *New York Times*, *Inside Higher Ed*, *Bloomberg News*, the *Christian Science Monitor*, *Money* magazine, NPR, and *Forbes*, to name a few. What was on their minds? Questions such as “How can you show the success and value of a college degree?” and “How is the increasing student-debt burden impacting college and career choices?” Annapolis President Chris Nelson (SF70) was one of the few liberal arts college representatives in the mix. The media’s take on higher education heavily influences public opinion, so it is important for St. John’s College and liberal education to be well represented.

This higher-education media dinner is one of many events Nelson attended this year as part of his outreach campaign to increase the visibility of St. John’s College and liberal education. Nelson’s message is reaching alumni, students, and friends who are familiar with and support liberal education as well as audiences who—after listening to Nelson—want to learn more: prospective applicants, parents, donors,

teachers and guidance counselors, policy-makers, and, of course, the media.

Nelson, a respected national spokesperson for liberal education, is regularly publishing and making appearances. His blog for Huffington Post (www.huffingtonpost.com/christopher-nelson) touches on topics such as “Lincoln and Liberal Education,” “The Miracle of Imagination,” and “The World’s Longest Running Seminar of Free Government.” His “SignPosts” blog (www.blogs.sjc.edu/christopher-nelson) celebrates everything at St. John’s from Senior Orals to the joys of original thought and Euclid. His blogs are linked to a growing number of other sites—further increasing the reach of the message about St. John’s.

Nelson is recognized as a leader in national, state, and local higher education circles. As an advocate for liberal education, he is a regular contributor to higher education-specific and mainstream media. Nelson is invited to comment and join forums for noted publications such as *Time* and *The Hechinger Report*. His letter to the editor, “The Fervor for Great Books and Big Ideas Isn’t Dead,” appeared in the *New York Times* in May. He was invited by the *Washington Post* to review an important new book, *Beyond the University: Why Liberal Education Matters* by Michael Roth, president of Wesleyan University.

Nelson is also writing his own book. In fact, the cornerstone of his outreach campaign is a book intended for a wide audience; he plans to meld his congenial “deskside” conversations with stories that speak to the values of St. John’s College and liberal education.

Nelson reflects, for instance, on his son’s encounter with liberal learning and “repairing an old junker, a 1960s vintage Volkswagen bug.” As his son tried to fix the broken washers for the windshield wipers, Nelson says “he was led to find for himself the answer to the problem just by a series of questions. His experience was liberating and a reminder that we all practice the liberal arts constantly. The

“All members of the St. John’s community are potential ambassadors for liberal education and for St. John’s College.”

only question is whether we practice them well or poorly. If we open ourselves to the possibility of learning something new, without relying on manuals or seasoned experts, we can all make new discoveries for ourselves.”

Nelson is working closely with a team of staff and faculty and a media consultant, as well as alumni and friends, as he moves forward with his campaign. “But of course, all members of the St. John’s community are potential ambassadors for liberal education and for St. John’s College,” says Nelson. “My role is to spur on that continuing conversation about the value of what we do at the college, so that it can be better understood and appreciated.” □

—PD

Learn more about Nelson’s activities: www.sjc.edu/about/leadership/presidents/annapolis-president

Subscribe to the SignPosts blog: www.blogs.sjc.edu/christopher-nelson

BRIEFLY QUOTED

“In the end, liberal education must take its bearings from the most fundamental question of all: What does it mean to be human?”

ANNAPOLIS PRESIDENT
CHRISTOPHER NELSON (SF70), in his
book review for *The Washington Post*
of *Beyond the University: Why Liberal Education Matters*,
by Michael Roth, president,
Wesleyan University



Why Stories?

BY JONATHAN TUCK

For rising seniors at St. John's College, summer provides an important rite of passage. In preparation for the first two seminars of the fall, each of them must read Tolstoy's *War and Peace*. It's prudent not to begin too late: the vast historical novel of the Napoleonic wars occupies 1,215 pages in the excellent Pevcar/Volokhonsky translation, apart from notes and index.

The Use of Stories:
Faculty members consider Tolstoy and compelling works of fiction on the Program.

At the rate of 90 pages per week, it's enough to fill the whole summer with seminar readings for each Monday and Thursday. The action ranges across most of Europe and involves armies of hundreds of thousands of men. It is truly a "great book" in size and scope as well as in power and beauty; yet most of the reader's concern is narrowly focused on the fates of six or seven characters, members of three noble Russian families.

We come to know these people inside and out, better perhaps than we know our own families or close friends. It is very hard to remember that they are not real. As Isaac Babel said, "If the world could write by itself, it would write like Tolstoy." When the narrative proper concludes with Part One of the Epilogue, we feel betrayed. It cannot be that there is no more! Another generation is growing up: what will become of young Nikolenka? And what about Pierre? Will his political activities get him into trouble? How happy are these marriages? We want desperately to find out what will happen next. It's this very curiosity that keeps us reading; though the book is long, we fly through it after a while, hoping that our favorites will find the happiness they have been seeking for years.

OPPOSITE: A scene from
War and Peace
ART RESOURCE, NY

Why is Tolstoy on the Program?

An old saw I have heard is that St. John's students graduate unaware of the Protestant Reformation and the French Revolution. It is one of many variants on the theme that we somehow neglect "history." The particular variant and the general charge have some force to them, though the true force is not what is most often intended. What is most often intended is the idea that we do our students a disservice by leading them to neglect the "historical context" in which the authors wrote (and which shaped their ideas). The typical argument is upside down: In fact, we come to understand the historical context by reading the works of the greatest minds that illuminate such context. It is in this light that some of the power of reading Tolstoy's *War and Peace* emerges for us. Tolstoy brings to life (or to the work of art) Napoleon as man and myth, the great movements of modern Russian politics, the general tumult of enlightenment rationalism (and nationalism) and the many other forces by which "Europe" was convulsed in the 19th century, the twilight of the ancient regime, and the lived experience of the consequences of Hegel's interpretation of the "world-historical." Without reading the great literature that comments on, or animates, the times, we do indeed have a "historical" lacuna. Reading the enlightenment philosophy of the late 18th and early 19th centuries, without reading *War and Peace*, is something like reading Plato and Aristotle without reading Homer, Aeschylus, and Sophocles.

—J. Walter Sterling (A93),
Santa Fe dean



This longing is inspired by the raw power of pure storytelling. Most of us have stayed up all night to finish a compelling tale. We have to find out; it seems like a matter of life and death, as it was for the Sultan and Scheherazade. Sometimes the story will lack the grandeur and dignity of Tolstoy or Homer; we call them "guilty pleasures"—police procedurals, country-house whodunits, Gothic romances, beach reading, page-turners. But why should this pleasure make us feel guilty? As Aristotle reminds us, our desire to know, to "have seen," is natural to us as human beings. Unlike gossip, for example, even the most trivial fictional narratives don't seem to harm anyone else. Perhaps certain kinds of coarseness in a story can harm us, but often the shame we feel at having squandered a few hours on the wrong sort of book springs

from a tacit comparison: we could have spent that time reading something more *useful*, something good for us. What use can we make of stories?

At St. John's, novels usually appear in the seminar list right after a lengthy vacation. *War and Peace*, *Don Quixote*, *Middlemarch*, *The Brothers Karamazov*—each long book gets only two evenings of discussion. The usual result, of course, is that we try to see the work as a synchronic whole, rather than focusing on the diachronic experience of reading. We look back and try to pick out themes and ideas. At the end of his book, Tolstoy does the same thing. In Part Two of the Epilogue to *War and Peace*, he discards his characters and suddenly turns philosopher, telling us what we should infer from the events of the story about causation in history and human freedom. Many of



his claims have appeared before, embedded in the text. (For example, see the beginnings of Volume III, Parts 1, 2, and 3; Volume IV, Parts 2 and 3; and Epilogue, Part 1.) Like many other readers, I have always thought that Tolstoy marred his great novel slightly by giving in to the temptation to preach a moral at the very end. He should have trusted his tale more. But in our seminars, in our necessarily retrospective treatment of his story and other stories, we often do something very similar. We distance ourselves from the events narrated in searching for their meaning.

Should we first approach a seminar work from the outside, as a whole, or work through it from the inside? If we are reading a work that is not a story—say, a philosophical work with an argument—we often try first to restate the argument with precision. But when we read a story, we seldom feel the need to retell the plot. Instead, we reach into the story from without, looking for what it is “about.” We are used to arguments; it is tempting to try to find a doctrine, a truth-claim, in everything we read. Our desire to make our stories philosophical may assure us of our own seriousness, but do we then misrepresent the concreteness of our experience of reading? I have sometimes flippantly tried to deflect students who try to turn a novel into a treatise by saying, “The moral of every great novel is that

There is and should be wisdom in the best stories, even if it is hard to specify it in the form of a proposition. Although Tolstoy’s story seems to tell itself, as Babel said, there is always a teller behind the tale, and a reason for telling it. Stories that provoke reflection and repay rereading are never just about themselves. *Pace* Socrates, the war between philosophy and poetry need not last forever.

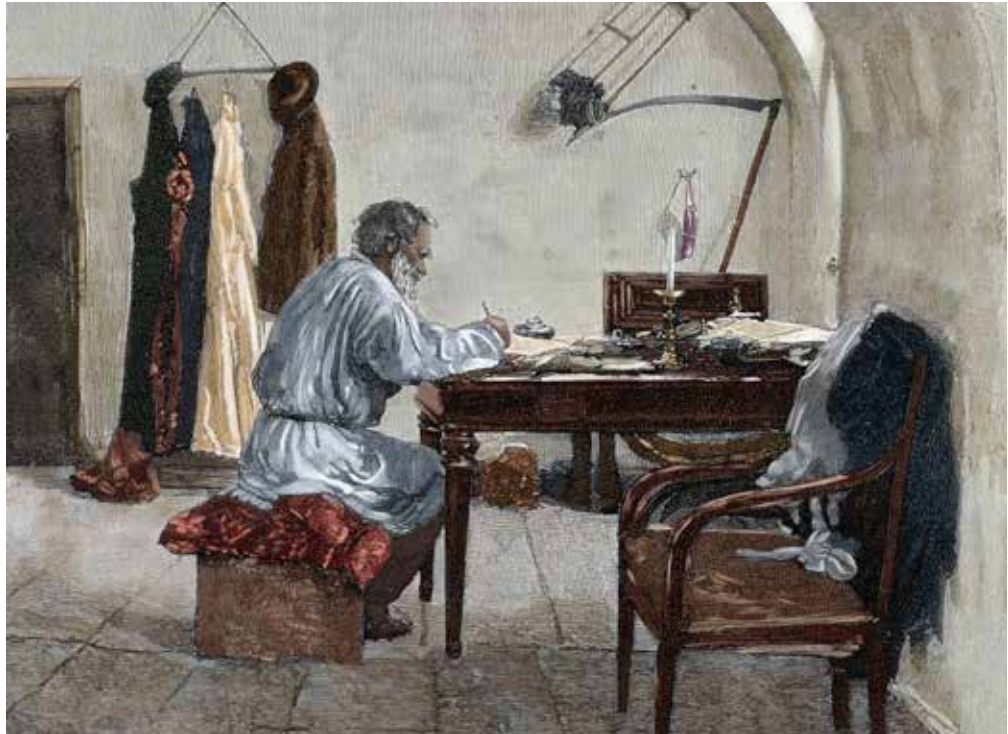
It’s no doubt foolhardy to try to write a short paragraph about a writer with such epic proclivities. But Tolstoy himself suggests that small drops may reflect entire globes. At a key moment in *War and Peace*, Pierre has a brief vision of a vibrating globe composed of water drops. In an urge to reflect the divine being at the center of this globe, each drop strives to expand, spreading until it eventually merges with the whole and loses its identity. The peasant Platon Karataev embodies this essential tendency: his every feature and gesture is “round,” he doesn’t distinguish one person from the next, and his speech consists mostly of common folk-sayings. Even the dog that has attached itself to Karataev is characterized only by an absence of particularity—by “its not belonging to anyone, and the absence of a name and even of a breed, even of a definite color.” The impulse to dissolve the bounds of individuality extends even to the central characters: Pierre and Natasha finally appear as a typical married couple, talking contentedly “as only a husband and wife can talk.” This drive toward the archetypal isn’t peculiarly human: the old oak that initially attracts Prince Andrei’s attention by its apparent refusal to put out leaves in expansive springtime gestures has, a month later, become indistinguishable from the other trees in the forest. Only after some effort does Andrei discern it “spreading out a canopy of juicy, dark greenery.” As the old oak comes to life it looks more and more like every other tree in springtime. Perhaps we read Tolstoy, then, for the very reasons we read every other great writer: to catch sight, if we can, of how particulars reach out toward the universal.

—Margaret Kirby, tutor

When we tried to take him off once on the Santa Fe campus, the rising seniors wouldn't let us. We could not persuade them that there could really be a substitute.

I think Dostoyevsky is right to say that Tolstoy writes the way a dreamer dreams: with every detail in place, fully realized down to the last cuff link and collar button. Or so at least it seems to the rapt audience. The deployment of such Old Master portraiture on the biggest story of the 19th century—the story of Napoleon's conquest of Russia and subsequent ignominious retreat—makes a book unlike any other I know. Tolstoy means to step into the same arena as Homer: *War and Peace* is his *Iliad* and *Odyssey* in one. And he is worthy of his model without ever seeming a mere imitator.

Robert Bart once proposed that we read great works of literature partly in order to approach the various Medusas of human life as Perseus did the Gorgon: not looking directly into their petrifying faces but in the reflection of a shield. Tolstoy offers a shield for anyone who hopes not to wind up paralyzed by Love or War, Ambition, Ideology, Politics, or History. One comes to live inside his book and through his characters for the weeks one reads it, and perhaps (especially after a good seminar or two) never entirely leaves it behind again. The characters are unforgettable. Sixteen-year-old Natasha is able to look into a mirror before her first ball and say, in all sincerity, "Who is that charming girl?" Pierre is saved from a firing squad because of how he looks into an officer's eyes. For Prince Andrei, living becomes an insoluble problem. How does one know that the pictures a book shows of human hearts



life is complicated." Similarly, Mark Twain begins *Huckleberry Finn* with the disclaimer: "Persons attempting to find a motive in this narrative will be prosecuted; persons attempting to find a moral in it will be banished; persons attempting to find a plot in it will be shot." Apart from a desire to be funny, Twain may have other motives here, but he knows, and we know, that his story has a moral content that can be questioned and discussed. That's why *Huck Finn* is a great book. There is and should be wisdom in the best stories, even if it is hard to specify it in the form of a proposition. Although Tolstoy's story seems to tell itself, as Babel said, there is always a teller behind the tale, and a reason for telling it. Stories that provoke reflection and repay rereading are never just about themselves. *Pace* Socrates, the war between philosophy and poetry need not last forever.

The heroes and heroines of *War and Peace* all suffer greatly in their search for happiness and meaning. Some of them, especially Pierre Bezukhov, continually ask about the meaning of their experience, even while it is happening; but all of them engage in such questioning at the novel's end. Though most readers love Pierre, it is hard not to consider

him somewhat comical, at least some of the time; part of the reason is that he sometimes seems to think that the meaning of life should be easily expressible in the form of doctrine or a proposition. If learning comes through suffering, perhaps these characters learn not to expect such easy answers. Because they seem so real, we suffer along with them, and we learn, too. If the story can make us wiser, it must be a complex kind of patient, experiential wisdom. It's fitting, then, that we survey the events of the story in retrospect, as the characters do themselves.

If Tolstoy erred in Part Two of the Epilogue, it was only in his tone of impatience and overt didacticism. In the greatest stories—and *War and Peace* is one of them—the ideas, the themes, the world view are fully incarnated in the action and the characters. Often it's necessary to abstract them in order to speak of them, but it should feel like an act of violence, like a translation or a prose paraphrase of a poem. The way to regain the perfect interpenetration of Aristotle's big three—plot, character, and thought—is to read the novel again. □

Jonathan Tuck is a tutor in Annapolis.

Illustrations: BELOW AND PAGE 18: Illustrations for War and Peace found in the collection of the State Borodino War and History Museum, Moscow. Paintings by Andrei Nikolayev.

PAGE 20: The reading of the novella, The Kreutzer Sonata, at the Leo Tolstoy House (1889), painting by Grigori Myasoedov.

OPPOSITE PAGE: Tolstoy in his study. Engraving in "The Artistic Illustration" (1892).

are true pictures? Maybe the great books are the ones that help you start to know. Tolstoy writes that kind of book.

—Cary Stickney (A75), tutor

I like to think of the four years as starting with adventure stories. In my romantic way of looking at things, the freshman year would be better served by the *Odyssey*, but you can't read the *Odyssey* before the *Iliad*. The sophomore year used to start with the *Aeneid*. The junior year begins with *Don Quixote*. *War and Peace* fits right in there with that—a large adventure story for every year. One might say that *War and Peace* shouldn't be on the Program because it doesn't fit in so well with the other books. We don't have a good way of studying Napoleon, and *War and Peace* is not a good way of studying Napoleon because you just get a caricature of him.

—Sam Kutler, (Class of 1954), tutor emeritus

Is there a work of fiction or storytelling on the Program that you find to be especially compelling?

James Joyce's "The Dead" is a story I return to again and again. It is, to my mind, one of the great short stories in the English language. A pensive, gentle, but uncompromising spirit pervades the annual dance and dinner at the Misses Morkan's. Their small evening is a civilizing force that is slipping

Our desire to make our stories philosophical may assure us of our own seriousness, but do we then misrepresent the concreteness of our experience of reading? I have sometimes flippantly tried to deflect students who try to turn a novel into a treatise by saying, "The moral of every great novel is that life is complicated."

into the past, scarcely holding in check the frailties and tensions in their lives and those of their several guests. And yet the revealing, unsettling power of the past is made beautifully and clearly present through song and memory, in Joyce's words.

—Pamela Kraus, Annapolis dean

"Thucydides' *Peloponnesian War* was the first thing I had ever read that showed me there was movement toward order in the world (as well as chaos)."

—Jim Beall, tutor

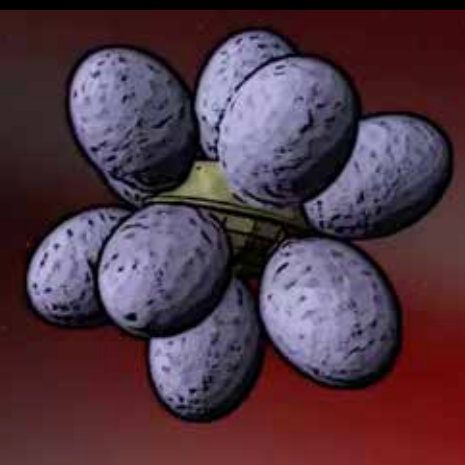
What story is more compelling than the story of Odysseus's homecoming? And who can tell a better tale than Odysseus himself? Disguised as a beggar, he responds to Penelope's insistent questions about his identity by claiming to be a man from Crete who entertained Odysseus on his way to Troy. Penelope melts in tears at the story, but tests him by asking what Odysseus wore and "what sort of man he was." The beggar describes a purple mantle and a tunic made of exceptionally fine fabric, but pins his reply on the description of a golden brooch that fastened the mantle. So artfully did it depict a hound attacking a fawn that the viewer forgot he was looking at an image and simply saw the fawn struggling convulsively in the hound's grasp. The beggar's tale takes Penelope back, vividly and concretely, to that day, some twenty years earlier, when she



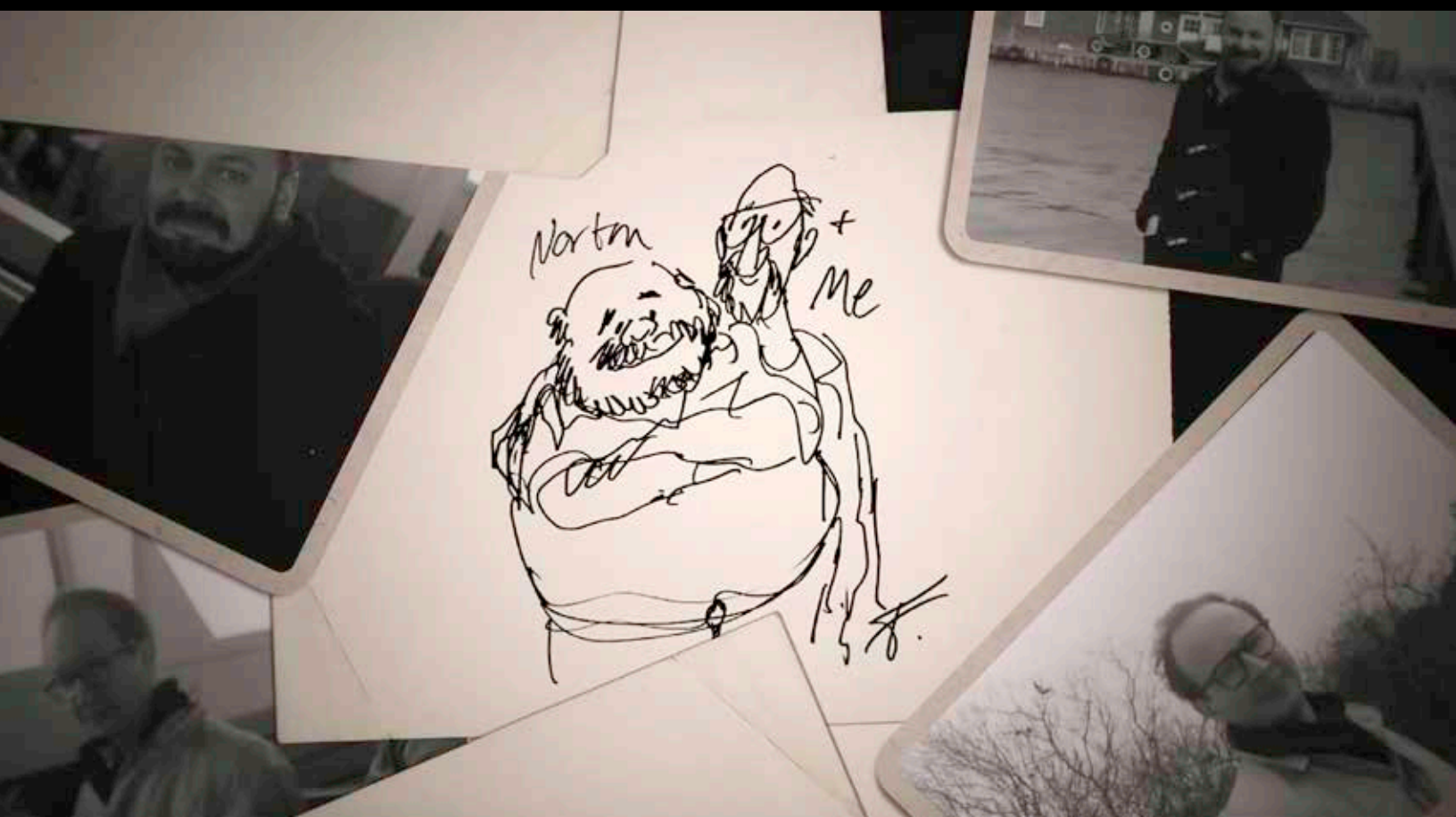
saw Odysseus off, and "attached the shining pin, to be his adornment." At the same time, the brooch, on which the story fastens, begins to bind Penelope to her husband in a new way. The object itself is long lost; what remains and makes itself present is their common memory of it. Whoever the stranger now before her is, Penelope must be bound to him by the memory of that marvelous brooch, as

she was bound to her departing husband by its tangible presence and the physical act of pinning it on his cloak. By focusing on a work of visual art, Odysseus also binds them in the knowledge that this story never fully reaches its conclusion—the fawn is forever struggling in the hound's grasp; the hound is forever unable to relax his grip.

—Margaret Kirby, tutor



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:
Mike Lacy (A12); Lee
Zlotoff (A74); detail of
textile art by Richard
Saja (SF00); sketch by
Jules Feiffer of himself
with Norton Juster in
Hannah Jayanti's (SF07)
film; detail of animated
film, *Mars*, by Geoff
Marslett (SF96)



Storytellers

What makes a story memorable and compelling? When these alumni connect with our deepest emotions, we recognize ourselves in their stories. They use everything from modern digital filmmaking and editing techniques to traditional, time-honored methods—visualizing a great story, observing character, directing a scene, writing a screenplay, scribbling notes and plot outlines on napkins and whiteboards, dreaming, even embroidering fabric—to reach us.

GREAT EXPECTATIONS

A Film by Hannah Jayanti (SFO7)
Premiers at the New Yorker Festival

BY ANNA PERLEBERG ANDERSEN (SFO2)

Norton Juster's children's book *The Phantom Tollbooth*, with illustrations by cartoonist Jules Feiffer, has inspired love bordering on worship for generations. It's the story of a boy named Milo "who didn't know what to do with himself—not just sometimes, but always."

He comes home one day to find a mysterious package containing materials for a small purple tollbooth. After putting it together for lack of anything better to do, he idly drives a toy car past it—and finds himself in the Lands Beyond. There, he explores a world both fantastic and overly literal, and sets forth on a quest to free the princesses Rhyme and Reason, "without whom wisdom withered."

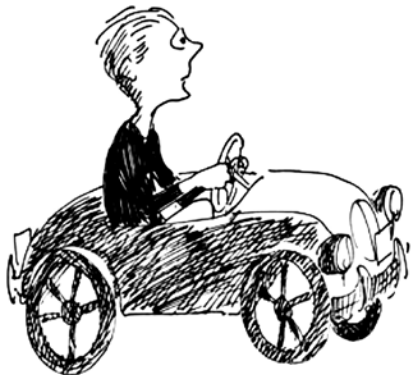
A few years ago, Hannah Jayanti (SFO7) felt as aimless as Milo. She left St. John's not intending to follow in the footsteps of her father, a documentary filmmaker. Instead, she was torn between "building incredibly hippie eco-houses" and academia. At first, the latter won out. Then she moved to New York City to study photo and video at the School of Visual Arts (SVA). She found herself struggling with the visual side of the MFA. Then she made an experimental film for a video class that took the opening narration of Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* and rearranged

the dialogue into stream-of-consciousness. This "strange little piece" required extensive editing, and Jayanti "lost herself" in the process, discovering that "this is the way my mind works. Editing is a form of writing in the visual world."

After that, she left SVA to explore forms of film that relied heavily on the editing process. Among other freelance projects, she made book trailers for Random House—a strange new genre, "half commercial and half artistic." While they often resemble movie trailers, book trailers are not excerpts of a previous visual work; a book trailer must film scenes that reference an entirely different medium. Jayanti also made documentary-style author videos, which she enjoyed: "Editing is half of directing [a documentary]," she says. "You have no idea what the story will be until you get into the editing room—it's where the story really comes together."



ELLI CHUNG



Her chance to make a feature-length documentary came in 2011. Janice Kaplan, a communications consultant she had met in Washington, D.C., sought Jayanti out in connection with the 50th anniversary of *The Phantom Tollbooth*. They intended to make a short video commemorating the anniversary, but after spending a weekend with Juster at his home in Amherst, Massachusetts, they knew there was enough material to sustain a longer film. “After that, people came out of the woodwork,” says Jayanti. That project became *The Phantom Tollbooth: Beyond Expectations*, which premiered at the New Yorker Festival in October 2013. It continues to appear at venues throughout the country: “art institutions, libraries, universities, museums, non-profits.”

Jayanti herself was a big fan of the book as a child. She loves “how many levels [the book] works on, how much you can get out of it at any age. The combination of really sharp wit and real, real warmth—that’s a really tricky combination to get for a writer.” She finds herself thinking often of the Terrible Trivium, a blank-faced monster who delays Milo’s quest by asking him and Tock to do menial tasks such as moving a pile of sand grain by grain—a metaphor that rings painfully true for anyone who has had a day job.

When she started filming, Jayanti was still managing a photography studio in Chelsea. “For the first eight months, I just paid for things, worked nights and weekends,” she says. Gradually she went part-time as she realized how much work



The documentary showcases interview footage with Juster, Feiffer, Jason Epstein, *New Yorker* staff writer Adam Gopnik, children’s illustrator Eric Carle, and kids sharing their enthusiasm for the story.

the movie would entail, and she is now fully freelance. To raise money for the film, she turned twice to Kickstarter, the crowdfunding website. Both times, she raised twice what she was asking for. She liked that “with Kickstarter, people feel they’re part of the process, like a mini shareholder in the film.” It’s a way for artists to connect directly with their audience and vice versa—readers for whom *The Phantom Tollbooth* has “tremendous emotional value” were able to contribute meaningfully to what they loved.

Still, Jayanti didn’t want to make just a fan movie. So she explores general themes: the importance of books in shaping our worldview, and the decades-long friendship between Juster and Feiffer, who trade quips and memories on screen together. Through them, she hopes viewers who haven’t read the book will be able to connect to the film. “You can love these men, and then fall in love with the book.”

The documentary showcases interview footage with Juster, Feiffer, Jason Epstein (the editor at Random House who published the book), *New Yorker* staff

Hannah Jayanti (SF07) in the field directing. An illustration by Jules Feiffer from *The Phantom Tollbooth* used in Jayanti’s film.

writer Adam Gopnik, children’s illustrator Eric Carle, and kids sharing their enthusiasm for the story. To break up the film’s inevitable talking-head nature, Jayanti commissioned two sequences from Eleanor Stewart, a Scottish stop-motion animator. During the opening credits, the first sequence is accompanied in voiceover by actor David Hyde Pierce, describing the book’s creation: Juster and Feiffer lived up and downstairs in a Brooklyn Heights brownstone, and would climb the stairs to share pictures and chapters.

The second sequence brings to life some of Juster’s philosophy, “which is, essentially, that facts aren’t important in and of themselves;” it’s “the connections between them.” Jayanti points out that “everyone in the Lands Beyond is a specialist.” Words are a separate kingdom from math, the borders jealously guarded. Milo’s rescue of Rhyme and Reason unites the kingdoms and brings harmony to the Lands Beyond, which can be read as Juster’s argument for a liberal arts education. “That’s really what life and learning is about,” according to him, “making connections with things, not how much you know or what specifics you know,” says Jayanti. “Which is quite St. John’s.” ☐

The Phantom Tollbooth: Beyond Expectations is available on DVD or live streaming at phantomtollboothdoc.com. More information: www.facebook.com/TollboothDocumentary and hannahjayanti.com.

ACCIDENTAL CEO

Writer, producer, scholar, film executive—James Schamus (A&I) takes up cycling

INTERVIEW BY PATRICIA DEMPSEY

“**T**here have been a couple of film scholars who wrote scripts, but he’s the only person in the business I’ve ever seen who said, ‘I can’t go to Cannes because I’ve got to work on my doctorate,’” notes *Variety* editor Tim Grey in a *New York Times* story (“The Professor of Micropopularity”). It’s a wonderful quote about James Schamus (A&I), an Oscar-winning collaborator. *Brokeback Mountain*, which Schamus produced and Ang Lee directed, won, among other honors, three Academy Awards, four Golden Globe Awards, and four BAFTA Awards. This year he stewarded *Dallas Buyers Club*, which was nominated for six Oscars and won three.

Schamus is a delightfully eclectic, passionate professor in Columbia University’s School of the Arts, where he teaches film history and theory, an academic whose career as a film executive is legendary. Many of the films he wrote, produced, and distributed around the world during his 12-year stint as CEO of Focus Features not only won awards, they broke barriers. Films such as *Lost in Translation* and *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* have captivated a generation of filmgoers. “Think of all the great films you’ve seen in the past 15 years—chances are James Schamus was behind them,” notes *The Guardian*.

On leave for a year from Columbia, the visionary film executive has traded in funding frenzies and boardroom politics—everything, it seems, except his bow ties and love of film. Schamus lives on the Upper West Side with his wife, novelist Nancy Kricorian. He shares a Manhattan moment with us, taking a break from cycling and the writing life.



PETER BOWEN

When did you realize that you have a gift for storytelling?

Probably when I got away with a number of bald-faced lies when I was quite young.

Tell us about working with award-winning film director Ang Lee. You wrote and produced many of his films. Is he a mentor?

Ang and I are kind of co-mentors. We have come of age, and have indeed aged, together. We both have a combination of ambition on the one hand, and a kind of childlike interest in new things we’re ignorant about and humbled by, on the other hand. Hence, I suppose, the wide variety of films [for example, *Brokeback Mountain*; *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*; *Sense and Sensibility*; *The Ice Storm*] we’ve done together.

Is there a favorite film, one that “sets the standard” for you?

The thing about movies is that your favorites can be less than classics and your most-admired works can be less-than-loved. And often truly imperfect movies have moments of profound sublimity and emotion that more perfectly crafted films can’t compete with.

You are known for your interest in films about “outsiders,” such as films about the West, the story of America, and immigrants. Is this still true today? Examples include films that you stewarded at Focus Features, such as *Dallas Buyers Club*, *Brokeback Mountain*, *The Pianist*, and *Milk*.

Outsider narratives will always draw me in at first blush, but sometimes you find them by going “inside,” too; *The Ice Storm* concerns wealthy, privileged suburbanites, but emotionally I find them all compellingly outsider-y.

Give us a glimpse into a “day in the life.” How do you spend most of your time?

I’m on leave from Columbia this year, so my commute is the r-train to my office in Chelsea, supplemented by my current addiction to New York’s bike-share program, an addiction that has resulted in the saving of hundreds of dollars in taxi fares and the burning of thousands of calories. Since October and my departure from my former job running Focus Features, I’ve written two screenplays (and I am working on a third), have set up as a producer of a few movies, and have been doing my usual compulsive movie going and reading. (Current obsession, one embarrassingly shared with much of New York’s hipsterdom, is Karl Ove Knausgaard’s *My Struggle*).

How did you come to be CEO of Focus Features? What skills did it take to do this job well?

I was an accidental CEO, but found the work very gratifying, though the past few years I found it increasingly difficult to balance my creative work with the business side of things. What makes a good CEO? Like teaching, there are no hard and fast rules—great teachers tend to mold their methods around their own strengths and weaknesses. I’d say my own strengths centered around an attention to creating an environment of trust and support at the company, making sure everyone, from assistants to presidents, felt secure raising their voices and safe knowing they had permission to fail. I made it a point to applaud everyone’s failures, my own included, as well as our successes. If you don’t fail, that means you haven’t risked anything.

At Focus, how did you know which films—many were “indies”—would be popular at the box office?

I didn’t.

“Outsider narratives will always draw me in at first blush, but sometimes you find them by going ‘inside,’ too; *The Ice Storm* concerns wealthy, privileged suburbanites.”

You have successfully financed, produced, distributed, and written many major, award-winning films. Did you ever consider directing?

No—when you have a choice between yourself and Ang Lee to direct your screenplay, whom would you choose?

In a *Guardian* (January 2014) interview, you say that being a “boy wonder screenwriter” would not have been a good thing for you. If not writing, what aspect of filmmaking is your passion?

Producing—making things possible for creative people to do their best work.

It has been said that films rather than books are the dominant storytelling medium of our century. Do you agree?

Neither is the dominant form. The dominant forms of storytelling of our time are the result of the algorithms which track and construct our digital identities and experiences. Every day, some 300 pieces of data you generate through your phone, computer, car, etc., are sold or bartered, and that data is constantly reconfigured and repackaged to shape what you see, hear, and interact with. The story of your life has become a function of this constant feedback loop between the data you produce and the data field constructed for you as the space you have to signify and produce more data.

Is there a film you saw in your youth that moved you, inspired you to write and produce movies?

No. I loved all films and all kinds of films—from the trashiest to the most artsy. As a kid, I was odd enough to enjoy watching the Friday night classics line-ups on my local public television station. Hard to imagine PBS actually running D. W. Griffith’s *Intolerance* for its full duration!

If you could take one book and one film with you, marooned on a deserted island, what would they be?

A handbook and video on boat making.

Do you enjoy going to the movies alone? Or is it always a social occasion? Favorite theater?

I make it a point to head to the multiplex at least once a week, usually by myself, to check out the latest on offer from the studios, as well as the trailers and pre-roll. New York has still, thankfully, a great range of art-house screens; I’ll bike to any of them for the right film.

At the Cannes Film Festival, did you take to the red carpet?

No. I’m not much of a tuxedo fan.

What, if anything, has changed in the film business since you got into filmmaking and producing?

The complexity of the business and the corporatization of the culture.

Any essential differences in the film industry in Hollywood as compared to New York?

Yes, there really isn’t a New York film industry—though there are very good crews, producers, and filmmakers who live in New York.

How do you “teach” film? Are you a film critic as well as a teacher?

I actually don’t teach film—I teach film history and theory, and often teach philosophy and aesthetics. My undergrad lectures are not Johnnie-style, but my graduate seminars—in which we often read folks such as Plato and Kant—are run “revolving-chair” style, so the last person to speak chooses the next, a habit difficult for non-Johnnies to form. But they get there after a few weeks.

Any changes with this generation of students—are they more sophisticated readers or filmgoers than previous generations? Are they better storytellers?

Students today are much more at home thinking of audiovisual media as forms of communication rather than as forms of mystifying entertainment. For them it’s another language they can learn.

Any up and coming filmmakers whose work excites you?

Happily, way too many to list here. There is an ocean of great work being done in so many different genres today. It’s dizzying.

Do you wear signature bow ties in the classroom? Or was that more as a film executive, and for black-tie affairs?

Somehow, the whole bow-tie thing became a schtick, but yes, I do wear them often when I teach, too.

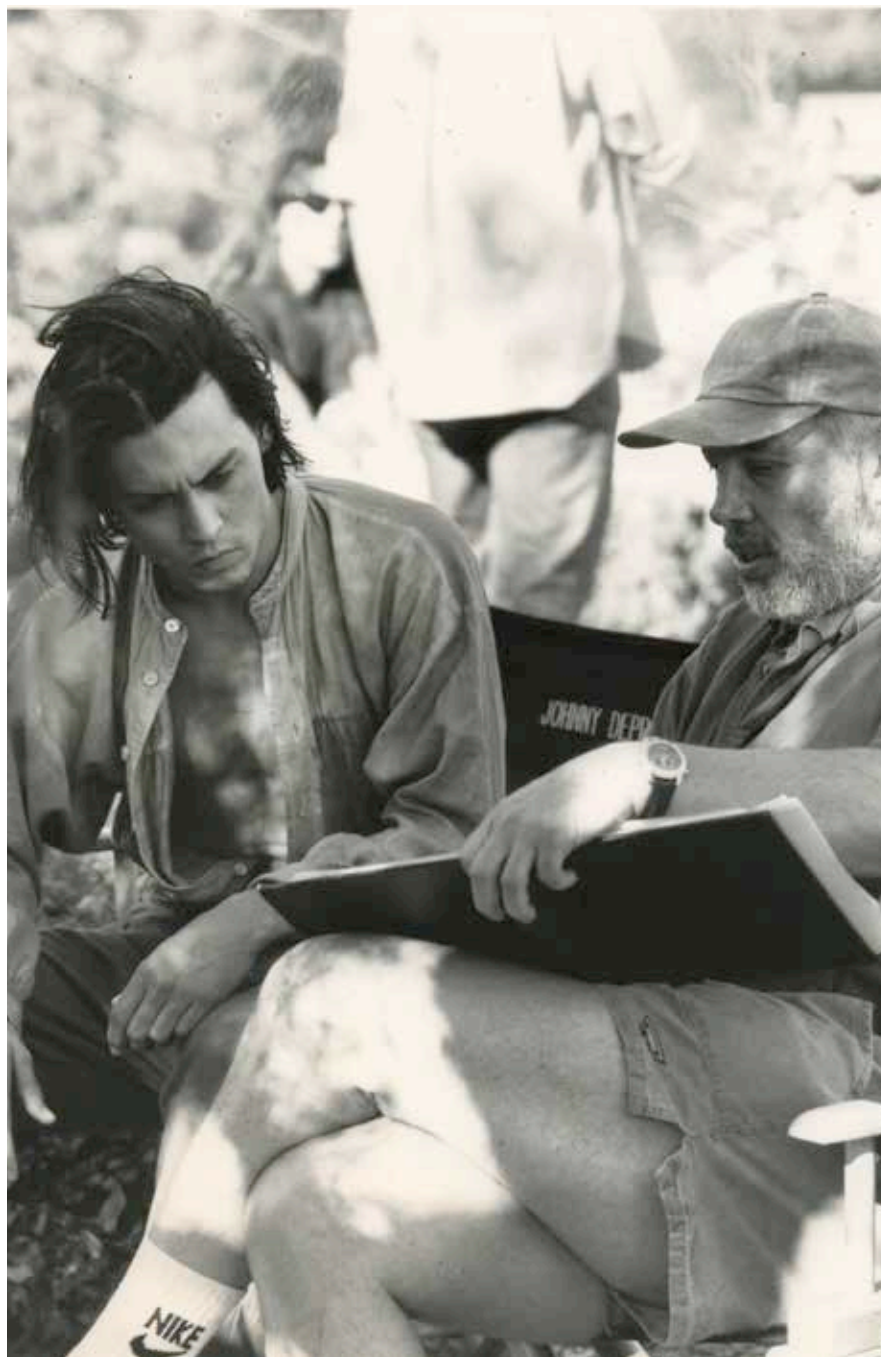
Tell us something about yourself that readers may be surprised to know.

I’m a VERY slow reader. ☹

LOVE STORY

Jeremy Leven (A64): Writing the Subtext of Our Lives

BY PAULA NOVASH



In the romantic comedy *Don Juan DeMarco*, written and directed by Jeremy Leven (A64), the title character declares, “There are only four questions of value in life. What is sacred? Of what is the spirit made? What is worth living for, and what is worth dying for? The answer to each is the same: only love.”

It’s a compelling line typical of its author. Leven is a successful Hollywood screenwriter, director, producer, and bestselling novelist who infuses his storytelling with thought-provoking, soulful subtexts. “Everything I do has a spiritual and philosophical underpinning,” he says. “I think that’s true for almost anybody in the creative arts. We experience some energy within us that reconstitutes into inspiration and vision, and where does that come from?” Leven explores this mystery in modern fables, where the stakes—love, fortune, and destiny—loom large.

“You try to create dialogue that reveals the truth of the moment, so that what the characters say and do sounds real.”

Leven’s career spans five decades. His films, which have taken him to locations across the U.S. and Europe, include *The Notebook*, *Don Juan DeMarco*, *Alex and Emma*, *The Legend of Bagger Vance*, and *My Sister’s Keeper*. He is also the author of the novels *Creator* and *Satan: His Psychotherapy and Cure by the Unfortunate Dr. Kassler, J.S.P.S.*, both of which he adapted for the screen.

Leven’s early credits include directing the musical, “The Perils of St. John’s,” for the Johnnie’s Modern Theater Group—which he founded and directed—during his college years. “I always thought I’d begin

Jeremy Leven (A64) discusses a scene on the set of Don Juan DeMarco with Johnny Depp.

an Oscar speech with ‘I owe my whole professional life to St. John’s College, where I learned how to think, write, and read,’” he says with a smile.

Leven began that professional life as a Harvard-and-Yale-affiliated clinical psychologist and neuroscientist. After the breakout success of *Creator*, he took a leave from Yale University Medical School. Leven realized he was at a crossroads. He consulted a Yale mentor who told him, “You will never not write; you are a writer.” Leven began adapting his novels for the screen.

“Writing and psychology are both about problem solving, which is what I like to do,” Leven says. Both professions also involve examining the complex behaviors, emotions, motivations, fears, and desires that connect us. On film, Leven says, the magical process of creating a believable character is collaborative. “You try to create dialogue that reveals the truth of the moment, so that what the characters say and do sounds real. It’s like a blueprint, and hopefully you’re giving the actor something interesting to work with.”

Another powerful layer is the subtle art of subtext, infusing what is felt, but not explicitly stated, into a scene. “In the best acting, the viewer is seeing two emotions from the character. For example, say we’ve set up a story of abuse that reaches back through generations. A man and his elderly father are driving by a playground and they see a child being spanked. The father tears up and the son, who is driving, reaches out and places his hand on his shoulder. This gets that double emotion, as we sense that the father is saddened by what he did to his son but is also feeling vulnerable as he remembers how he was beaten by his own father. And the son is both comforting his father for what the father went through himself, and in doing so, forgiving him.”

When writing a screenplay or adapting one from a book, how does Leven show the studio, director, and actors that his script will make a good film? He says it’s by tapping into the emotions underlying his characters’ actions. “Emotions are what pull us in—the characters’ vulnerabilities, desires, and fears. We can relate to them even if the

“Everything I do has a spiritual and philosophical underpinning. I think that’s true for almost anybody in the creative arts. We experience some energy within us that reconstitutes into inspiration and vision, and where does that come from?”

details of our lives are different from what the characters are experiencing.”

Leven was reminded of this when he wrote the screenplay for *The Notebook*, adapting the love story from the book by Nicholas Sparks. “Lots of what’s in my screenplay isn’t in the book. I added events and made the characters much more complex,” he says. “But Nicholas told me the movie was the closest adaptation he’s seen of any of his books.”

“Emotions can be conveyed powerfully in film, because you can get in so close and really focus on tiny facial movements and gestures,” Leven continues. “It’s completely different on stage, for instance, where gestures have to be larger than life to be appreciated by the audience.”

As a Hollywood veteran, Leven has worked with many A-List actors, from whom he has learned subtleties of subtext and dialogue. He tells a story about Marlon Brando, whom he directed in *Don Juan DeMarco*. “I jokingly said something in an Irish accent and he said, ‘Well, you know, there’s not just one Irish accent.’” Leven says Brando proceeded to perform at least a dozen different roles: “a barkeep, a farmer, a barrister, a judge, an aristocrat. And with every one not just the accent, but his body, muscles, and face changed as he tapped into the emotion, the essence of the character. It was riveting, and every character was someone who will keep me watching a screen for two hours.”

As a novelist, work is solitary bliss. As a screenwriter, Leven compromises and collaborates with directors, actors, and other writers, changing characters and plot lines. Even the music, says Leven, is a character in the film. “For a movie script, there are specific rules to follow,” he continues. “One page equals one minute of screen time, and you have to capture the

audience by the 12-minute mark. There’s a set, three-act structure: You can have a great idea and a great ending, but you have to make sure you have enough story to fill that 60 minutes in the middle.”

And, Leven explains, “You’re writing with others in mind. A screenplay needs to show studio executives that the story will appeal to a wide audience. It needs to give the director enough information to see how to make it, and also create characters that actors will want to play. The fun part of this is it becomes a scientific process, a challenge.”

Leven jokes that in Hollywood, studios look for a “high concept” film—which refers to a concept so low it can be expressed in one sentence. “It used to be that films like *One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest* or *The Lion in Winter* had more substance dramatically,” he says. “This doesn’t happen anymore. Executives look to invest \$100-200 million and make billions of dollars.”

Leven’s most recent film, 2013’s *Girl on a Bicycle*, (which the *New York Times* called a “sweet, often witty romantic comedy”), is set in Paris. The plot revolves around a recently engaged tour-bus driver who dreams about a beautiful woman he encounters on his route.

One of the movie’s themes is “the imagined life, the life you might lead,” says Leven. “What is life without dreams? Our dreams keep us going.” His new novel, *The Savior and the Singing Machine*, is about a young woman who may be a messiah. He’s also working on a stage musical for his love story, *Don Juan DeMarco*. “Love is the greatest emotion, and arguably the one people identify with most,” he says. “It is probably the most spiritual thing we can experience.” □



PHOTOS: THOMAS ALLENMAN

"There is no limit to what is possible," says Lee Zlotoff (A74). "We need to get out of the way so our creative process can succeed."

WHITEBOARDING IN MALIBU

Lee Zlotoff (A74) Taps the Narrative Power of the Subconscious

BY PATRICIA DEMPSEY

What a view. Some 2,500 feet above the legendary surf of Malibu, Lee Zlotoff (A74) is in his living room, scribbling on a whiteboard. It's an infinite horizon for ideas, a place to dream big. He works in his mountaintop home amid simple inspiration: the folk art he collects, a studio for building models, and the view—when the foggy “June-gloom” lifts—of the blue Pacific.

The noted writer, producer, and director often sketches with colored markers to visualize plot outlines and character and screenplay ideas. “I do most of my creating on the whiteboard—not the keyboard. By the time I sit down to write on the computer, the heavy-duty lifting is done. I turn to the computer to flesh out, say, dialog that I’ve already imagined for the piece.”

Zlotoff, known for his hit television series *MacGyver* (launched in 1985), has a new gig: he is writing a book to share his creative process. It will help everyone—from writers and military officers to entrepreneurs and teachers—to be more effective. The book, *The MacGyver Method*, provides a step-by-step process for tapping into the power of the subconscious to solve problems, discover new ideas, and clear the cobwebs of “conscious interference,” says Zlotoff. “It’s about having an active dialog with your subconscious; that’s the key, so you can, whenever you choose, tap into the most effective part of your mind.”

Zlotoff calls the subconscious “the storehouse of our stories. We are a narrative species; each night we dream, and each of our dreams is a story. We need these stories. This is why film is so compelling—it connects directly with your subconscious in a way that books do not. Between the visual images, the music, and the dialog of a film, your mind is being subtly stimulated on many levels.”

Certain stories endure, he says, because they resonate or connect with deep, internal narratives shared by a large population. “Ironically—or should I say paradoxically—the more unique and specific the details of a given story, the more universally it tends

to be embraced and accepted—as opposed to the frequent homogenizing that is a hallmark of many Hollywood films. Some examples are *The Graduate*, *Star Wars*, or *The Godfather* series, which are very specific visions that tap into the universal narratives of the search for identity, purpose and family.” In fact, the great turns in stories, says Zlotoff, are based on paradox. “What you don’t expect happens, but it still makes perfect sense, like John Nash’s journey in *A Beautiful Mind*. You follow the story, accepting all that you see, only to realize midway that you’ve been sharing the delusions of the main character.”

How does one tap into this power of stories and the subconscious—whether making a film, writing a screenplay, or trying to solve a business problem? The steps are simple. To name a few: Write down the problem. Task the subconscious. Incubation. “We need to get out of the way so our creative process can succeed,” says Zlotoff. To let his ideas incubate, Zlotoff builds models, a skill acquired during his high school years at Brooklyn Tech, working with molten metals and other materials. He is currently building a World War I trainer plane.

“I like to work with my hands. I started by making paper models of world monuments: the Empire State Building, the Taj Mahal, the Vatican, whatever I could find a kit for,” he explains. “I then progressed to wood models of ships and planes, as model building proved the best ‘incubation activity’ for my creative process.” Zlotoff describes how it helped him develop a character’s narrative story in *The Spitfire Grill* feature film script. “Whenever I would return from model building, I kept seeing this man hiding behind a tree, watching the main character, who was a young woman. I made a note of it but, having no clue who this man was, I put it aside. He continued to reappear when I worked on the story, so I realized I had to figure out who this guy was, and why he was there. Eventually he became an



“Whenever I would return from model building, I kept seeing this man hiding behind a tree, watching the main character, who was a young woman.”

integral part of the final story. Clearly, something in my subconscious was telling me I needed this figure.”

To give voice to his creative method, Zlotoff draws not only on his ability to visualize on a whiteboard; he uses his well-known character, MacGyver, a pragmatic, can-do Boy Scout of a cop who sports a Swiss Army knife and a blonde mullet. Through “Mac,” Zlotoff has found a voice. The fictional MacGyver is rooted in Zlotoff’s own experiences. “He is non-violent, resourceful. MacGyver’s world,” says Zlotoff, “is ‘you take what you got, turn it into what you think you need, not what you want.’ He has a sense of honor, humor, and humility. MacGyver uses a Swiss Army knife for everything.”

Zlotoff, whose name means “gold” in Russian, is as enterprising as MacGyver. His flair for business emerged as an undergraduate, living on Maryland Avenue, and running a contracting company with David Huston (A74). He married Rebecca Ann Soloff (A74), his high school sweetheart,

who now directs a preschool in Los Angeles. (They are divorced, with four children and four grandchildren).

Zlotoff got his start as a screenwriter in the mid-1970s in New York City as a secretary on a soap opera, *The Doctors*. He told the producer that he could write a better show, and gave him *Disasters in the Sun*, a sample script. “You have to be gutsy to survive—it’s a rough business,” says Zlotoff. “He liked the script and I became a soap opera writer.” Zlotoff’s speed as a writer was invaluable. “I could create an okay script in 10 days. My speed, in part, fueled my meteoric rise from freelance writer to story editor to being approved to write pilots.”

Later came *MacGyver*. Although CBS/Paramount still retains the rights to the original series, all the “so-called separated rights reverted back to me,” says Zlotoff. But those 139 episodes of the original show continue to run all over the world. In some places, *MacGyver* is a household word. “In Korea,” Zlotoff notes, “a pocket knife—any kind of knife that one carries—is called a ‘MacGyver.’”

Zlotoff sees *MacGyver* as “Johnnie perfection. He takes a Johnnie approach of thinking across disciplines to solve problems.” The character merges an “ability to think outside the box, as we’re encouraged to do at St. John’s,” with “my technical exposure from Brooklyn Tech.” Zlotoff also attributes a good part of Mac’s character to his father—“certainly the Swiss Army Knife.”

Currently Zlotoff is in discussions with several publishers for his book, *The MacGyver Method*. *MacGyver* walks its pages, sharing Zlotoff’s step-by-step method for creating—and living. Zlotoff is also developing a feature film about *MacGyver*. “I don’t usually quote Yoda,” says Zlotoff, “but Yoda did say, ‘There is do or do not. There is no try.’ You must believe you can do it, that there is no limit to what is possible.”

More information: www.macgyvermethod.com and www.macgyverglobal.com.

TOILE TALES

Richard Saja's (SF93) Whimsical Threads

BY PAULA NOVASH

At first glance, the textile art in a wooden frame appears to portray a scene from classical mythology. A cupid sits atop a rearing steed, and a young maiden in a long gown makes an offering to a reclining figure wearing a crown. The group is surrounded by colorful bunches of grapes, lush foliage, and stylized birds, embroidered on a background of pale linen.

When you look closer, another layer of complexity appears: the figures are stitched in metallic and glow-in-the-dark threads. The crown is actually a black-and-blue Mohawk, the witnesses include a rabbit, and the fluffy-haired maiden is holding not wine or sacred fruit, but a box that looks a little like a birthday cake, emanating spiky rays. Its title? “Behold: ELECTRICITY!”



JOHN EMERSON PHOTOGRAPHY

Richard Saja (SF93) savors irreverent twists in a modern retelling of traditional stories.

This creation is typical of textile artist Richard Saja (SF93), who gives centuries-old fabric patterns a modern sensibility by infusing them with fanciful style, a touch of mystery, and most of all, a sense of humor. Saja embellishes traditional toile fabrics (think Colonial Williamsburg) with whimsical embroidery, creating delightfully offbeat stories that celebrate the quirkiness of everyday living while exploring themes such as tolerance and acceptance.

“Toile is similar to a coloring book in that it’s begging to be enhanced,” Saja explains. “What I do is draw out a story with my embroidery, embellishing so you can see yet another narrative.” It’s reminiscent of what a fool or joker in medieval times might do, revealing a greater truth within a cheeky, irreverent presentation.

The word “toile” means cloth, and the fabric most often replicates traditional French designs that depict pastoral scenes in a repeating pattern, using a single color on a light background. What Saja does with his needle, he says, is create a sort of “playful subversion to toile’s traditional role, where everything blends and has equal weight. By giving attention to some element and making it special and individual, I’m taking something old and making it relevant again.”

Saja grew up in the Jersey Shore town of Point Pleasant, where he felt out of step with many of his peers. Navigating “summer crowds and deserted boardwalk in winter,” he was “kind of a weird and imaginative kid,” Saja says. “I was constantly making things, like dioramas of haunted houses and superhero costumes.”

He was also an avid reader, whose favorite books featured kids who had “to fend for themselves, like *My Side of the Mountain* or *From The Mixed Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler*.”

“It’s not my intention to tell someone what to think about it. People see my art all at once, like a painting, but then it can unfold more like a book or film, depending on the viewer. My work appeals to many types of people because it can be interpreted on many different levels.”



COURTESY RICHARD SAJA

At that time, there was little “awareness about tolerance and acceptance, or the impact of bullying,” he continues. “So I came to identify with the marginalized, misunderstood monster types from old movies and comic books.” In Saja’s works, unusual characters often interact seamlessly with conventional ones; in “Scenes from a Marriage,” for example, an alluring masked woman in a ball gown holds the hand of a gentle green, fur-covered creature as they dance the minuet.

“A monstrosity is added to something bucolic, and it can co-exist and be accepted within that framework,” Saja explains. “It celebrates difference; the freaks are recognized, accepted, and affirmed.”

Saja moved to New Mexico after high school and created ceramic art before enrolling at St. John’s Santa Fe campus.

After completing his degree, he worked as an art director in a Madison Avenue advertising agency. Then, laid off during the dot-com bust, he started a decorative arts business with fellow Johnnie Martha Alexander. While working on a design project for cushions, Saja recalls, he woke from a dream picturing Maori facial tattoos embroidered onto figures in toile. A self-taught artist, he soon realized that embroidery was “a natural outlet for my overall fastidiousness, and I fortunately have some innate talent for it.”

Saja says an endless number of tales exist within every toile; his interpretation is only one among many. “I usually have some general idea in mind when I begin a piece. For example, I liked the idea of using candy colors, which then became “Dionysos in Candyland.”

(See it at <http://historically-inaccurate.blogspot.com>.)

“But then it evolves organically,” he continues, “It’s not my intention to tell someone what to think about it. People see my art all at once, like a painting, but then it can unfold more like a book or film, depending on the viewer. My work appeals to many types of people because it can be interpreted on many different levels.”

In a hard-edged, high-tech world, people seem to appreciate the time and energy that goes into his creations. “There are no shortcuts; these are labor-intensive projects that need care and love to bring them to life,” Saja says. “I will probably never have copycats because it takes too long to do this kind of work well.”

Creating his art is contemplative, even meditative, says Saja. He often embroiders to documentaries, which serve as a sort of “white noise” to his creative process. “I’ll turn on something about apes or Egypt—it’s learning while doing.”

Saja’s art constantly surprises him. “There’s a magic that comes through in some pieces that I couldn’t possibly plan for, where the stitching is imbued with emotion,” he explains. “When I was young, I was different. That was oppressive. Now being different has become a positive for me, with external affirmation coming from many quarters. My design vocabulary is conveying a message of acceptance and hope, and I love that emotion can be conveyed through my embroidery and shared and felt by the viewer.”

Saja’s art has been featured in outlets such as the *New York Times* and *Vogue*. It is displayed in museum and private collections around the world. He has partnered with designers that include Mother of Pearl, Opening Ceremony, Keds, and Christian Lacroix. Examples of his art are currently on display at the Snyderman-Works Gallery in Philadelphia. 

SEEKING WOMEN IN FILM

If you are a Johnnie, a female, and working in the film industry, please share your stories with *The College*.

SWERVE: WALK ON THE WILD SIDE

From Sci-fi Animation to Live-action Drama and a Rocker Documentary, Geoff Marslett (SF96) Hops

By ANNA PERLEBERG ANDERSEN (SFO2)

“**I** like delving into things, at least for a little while, and storing them for later on,” says indie filmmaker Geoff Marslett (SF96). This intellectual restlessness drives his art: he has written, produced, and directed short films both animated and live-action, including the first video for cartoonist/musician James Kochalka’s epic ditty, “Monkey vs. Robot” (sadly, no longer available to watch online). His production company, Swerve Pictures (yes, it’s a Lucretius reference), has made two very different feature films, *Mars* (2010) and *Loves Her Gun* (2013). Lately, he has directed trailers and even acted in a few films—he enjoys providing just a little of other people’s stories. Off-camera, he teaches at the University of Texas at Austin, having earned an MFA in film production there in December 2000.

Mars is an animated sci-fi romantic comedy that Marslett wrote and directed. He also had a hand in editing and producing, as well as leading the arduous process of animation. For the film’s unique look, Marslett wrote a computer program that reduced images of actors in front of a green screen to between 16 and 64 colors, then into vectors—scalable graphics defined not by the position of pixels but by the mathematical curves that make up the image. Marslett’s math background came in handy; while at St. John’s, he studied theoretical physics and differential equations on the side, and pursued an associate’s degree in math during a few summers.

Processed through this program, Marslett explains, footage acquires “weird, drift color palettes” similar to traditional rotoscoping, where an animator draws over film footage. Marslett and his team used this technique for features like eyes and mouths that they wanted to look more polished. All the backgrounds were CGI-generated. Creating these composite images took years to accomplish, with five animators working nearly nonstop in a kind of artistic delirium. In 2007 and 2008, the terabytes of space required to store the images were “expensive and ridiculous,” says Marslett. Now a four-terabyte drive is \$150 on Amazon. *Techne* moves ever more rapidly.



LAUREN MODERY, SWERVE PICTURES



Marslett's new feature project is, as one would expect, entirely different from those that preceded it: a documentary on "costume rockers," bands with a shtick to their outfits or songs that occupy a "strange place between music and theater."

The final result of all this labor is stunning. Part dream, part comic book, part solid reality, it's a perfect visual complement to a story of space exploration and romance, two human endeavors that Marslett feels have much in common. "As soon as you talk to [a person who catches your eye], you change her, she changes you—neither of you is really the same as what you saw across the room. That's always completely unattainable." Exploring a new country is the same, he says: "The minute you get there, you're slightly different, the country's slightly different. Going to Mars is the same way."

Marslett is always looking for different ways to tell stories. "I'm gonna call it a strength," he asserts. "Some people call it a problem." So where *Mars* was "very much about construct, very controlled," *Loves Her Gun* takes a nearly opposite approach. A live-action drama shot on location in Greenpoint, Brooklyn, and Austin, it's the story of a woman who flees the city after being mugged and finds herself caught up in Texas gun culture, struggling to find an emotional middle ground between safety and paranoia. Marslett and his co-writers, Laura Modery and Geoff Lerer,



ABOVE LEFT: Geoff Marslett (*SF96*) talks barbeque and film at an Austin eatery. ABOVE: Frames from Marslett's animated film, *Mars*.

scripted the action of every scene tightly, but wrote no dialogue. The actors improvised every word, which was "probably terrifying," says Marslett, but results in a naturalistic rhythm not often found in film. Hesitations, misspoken words, and filler syllables are all intact. This approach to storytelling—obviously far from the constraint of the multi-step animation in *Mars*—adds to the tale's gritty, bleak nature. Even in the trailer, it's eerie and effective.

Both movies have had some success at film festivals like Austin's own SXSW. *Loves Her Gun* won the Louis Black Lone Star award in 2013, an unexpected achievement. (Marslett almost skipped the award ceremony.) In addition, *Mars* has shown at BAMCinemaFest in Brooklyn, the BFI London Film Festival, and the San Francisco

Independent Film Festival, along with many others. *Loves Her Gun* has won accolades from the *Los Angeles Review of Books* and Indiewire. Marslett thinks *Mars* will have more longevity, despite the film world's snobbery about animated films. Marslett estimates that making an animated film takes roughly ten times as much work as a live-action movie, yet the festival circuit often takes an "aw, it's almost like you made a real film" attitude toward them. As a filmmaker outside the New York-Los Angeles axis, he's happy with modest success, with "doing something because I like doing it," even if it doesn't pay well—yet.

Marslett's new feature project is, as one would expect, entirely different from those that preceded it: a documentary on "costume rockers," bands with a shtick to their outfits or songs that occupy a "strange place between music and theater." He knows that place well, since he plays accordion in a band that performs songs inspired by *The Karate Kid*, while wearing prosthetic arms and legs frozen in permanent crane-kick position. (One of the bands on his radar is The Pizza Underground, a Velvet Underground cover band that sings songs like "I'm Beginning to Eat the Slice" and "Papa John Says"; it consists of four of his friends and Macaulay Culkin. Really.) There is no firm date for the documentary's completion, but it's sure to be quirky and thoughtful, like Marslett himself. □

Learn more about Geoff Marslett's (*SF96*) filmmaking: www.swervepictures.com

PURSUING A DREAM

Nashville's Music Row Sets the Stage for Mike Lacy (A12)

BY GREGORY SHOOK

Barely a decade after making his first film, Mike Lacy's (A12) work appeared on the silver screen—and took him by surprise. Alone at the movies, Lacy watched in amazement as the 2011 PSA for the Tennessee Department of Mental Health, in which he had acted and helped to produce, rolled with the commercials. He announced to everyone in the theater, “I made that. That was me playing the drug dealer.”

It's such a moment that motivates Lacy to pursue his longtime dream of a career in film. After graduating from St. John's in 2012, he moved to Nashville to be part of what he calls the city's “developing industry with a thriving freelance community.” A year later, he launched his own freelance company, Prometheus Films, creating music videos, short films, and multi-media projects. At age 24, he can practically do it all—act, direct, produce, and edit. Lacy's industrious nature is the main ingredient for his success. “I spent a lot of last week uploading 160 hours of footage for a Jimi Hendrix documentary,” he says. “On the weekend, I was second camera on a music video shoot. We shot overnight in this motorcycle shop from 8 p.m. to 5 a.m. It's nerve-racking to think about making a creative life for myself, but it's something I've been passionate about since I was about 12 years old.”

Lacy's first music video with his company is for the 2013 single “Not So Much Anymore” by David Berg, an acclaimed songwriter who has worked with country music luminaries Kenny Chesney, Carrie Underwood, and Keith Urban, and has penned chart-topping hit songs for Reba McEntire and others. The video centers on a young woman in anguish over a troubled romantic relationship, who finds comfort in her circle of friends. “I had a vision for the video, but I wasn't making a good elevator pitch,” says Lacy, who says that the project almost didn't happen. “I finally

“A hard thing for me, as someone who likes storytelling, is that music videos are not about telling a story as such.”

said [to Berg], ‘Look, I don't know how to explain my [idea], but this [video] is something that is really important to me.’”

Music has always been close to Lacy's heart. In high school, he played guitar and keyboards with his band, The Shel Silversteins, and absorbed a steady diet of MTV and VH1. Today, he admits that making a music video is among his greatest challenges. “A hard thing for me, as someone who likes storytelling, is that music videos are not about telling a story as such,” says Lacy. “There may be a beginning, middle, and end, but it's not always clear whether there's a protagonist and a clearly stated conflict.” Being a Johnnie, Lacy views ambiguity as an opportunity to explore, learn, and be creative. In a music video, he wants to elevate the song, using images to elicit emotion and bring out fresh, sometimes unexpected elements of the music. “A good video conveys something that cannot, or maybe should not, be put into words,” says Lacy, who typically avoids literal visual interpretations of a song. “If the lyrics are about the Los Angeles skyline, you don't want to show images of



JOSH ANDERSON

the L.A. skyline.”

During his sophomore year at St. John's, Lacy experienced an existential dilemma that ultimately led to a fateful discovery. “I was conflicted because here I was learning ancient Greek and astronomy,” says Lacy. “I thought, ‘What am I doing with my life? Is this really my passion?’” He found his answer in books by renowned film editor Walter Murch, whose résumé includes *The Godfather*, *The English Patient*, *Cold Mountain*, and *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*. Lacy discovered that classical literature is woven into Murch's work; he once edited a film scene inspired by a canto from Dante and used Kepler's harmonic theory to figure out how to interplay music with edits.

The summer before his junior year, Lacy sought out the film editor at his San Francisco home. “I looked him up on the Internet and wrote him an e-mail,” says Lacy. A few weeks later, he was in Murch's kitchen, where the like-minded souls talked for hours about the role of music in the lives of human beings and the ways that classical thought can be applied in modern films. “We sometimes draw a line between classical learning and modern day, making them seem at odds,” says Lacy. “But there are people like Murch, who are in love with creating things for modern audiences and don't think it's such a harsh dichotomy. I find that inspiring.” ☐

Learn more about Mike Lacy (A12): prometheoidspeaks.wordpress.com



A Vision Becomes a View

BY SUSAN BORDEN (A87)

The background of the entire page is a photograph of a misty mountain landscape. In the lower-left foreground, a small, white, two-story building with a cupola and a cross on top sits atop a hill. The hill is covered with trees, some of which have yellow autumn foliage. The rest of the image is a soft-focus view of a mountain range under a thick layer of mist or fog.

For 50 years, students and tutors in Santa Fe have been inspired by the view of neighboring mountain Atalaya and the tantalizing snow on the Santa Fe Ski Basin as they read, write, meet, study, and socialize in the campus coffee shop.

This vista, it turns out, is not a lucky accident, according to Charles “Chuck” Nelson (Class of 1945), a former member of the Board of Visitors and Governors. It is part of the earliest vision of the campus. Nelson recalls a day in 1962 when John Gaw Meem drove him and other board members to the site of what would be the Santa Fe campus:

“He showed us where he thought the main buildings would be put and I remember him describing to us where the dining hall would be [and saying that] there would be large windows with panoramic views of the mountains while you’re sitting there having your lunch.... That, of course, all came out as he indicated it would.”



William Darkey (Class of 1942)

“He [Weigle] was passionate about liberal education in the St. John’s way and he just thought it should be offered to more people. When we couldn’t accommodate as many students as wanted to come in [Annapolis], that’s when he wanted to come out and start this new college.”

— TOM SLAKEY, TUTOR EMERITUS AND
FORMER DEAN, ANNAPOLIS

This experience of a vision realized is a theme often repeated when people talk about the founding and history of the Santa Fe campus. It’s a theme that tutor Claudia Hauer is capturing and preserving as she works on an oral history project in celebration of the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Santa Fe campus.

Hauer had just returned from a leave of absence in October 2012 when Santa Fe Vice President Victoria Mora mentioned that she was planning to start an oral history project interviewing

Santa Fe’s founders. Hauer, who has a long-standing interest in creative nonfiction, told Mora to sign her up for the project.

Hauer began the project that December with interviews of the people who were present at the founding, including Nelson and former board member Bud Kelly (H02). She then spoke with all of the living former deans and presidents, along with tutors who were either present at the campus’s opening in 1964

and tutor and former assistant dean Don Cook (H97) talking about riding his horse to and from the campus: “I can remember times I would ride home after seminar. It was a nine-mile ride each way, and I would go out and saddle my horse and go home in the complete dark down the arroyo behind school. That was before any houses were back there. I remember the sense of solitude, and it made me think about the west and how people were alone for long periods of time. I remember the ice cracking under the horse’s hooves, just that one sound going down the arroyo. I remember feeling the isolation and how welcoming it was to come up over the hill about three or four miles down and see lights and [thinking about] what that must have meant to people who were out here in places like Arizona and New Mexico, to be weeks by themselves and then to come upon a campfire or some other sign of human life. I got quite a bit out of those rides back and forth to school.”

Richard Weigle’s vision is another common theme in the oral histories. It reveals itself in the campus’s history through the visionary endeavors of those who sought not to recreate the Annapolis campus out west, but to create a St. John’s College of their own.

Hauer describes the work of the founders and early tutors: “That core group brought incredible passion to building this campus. They felt that the more they put into it, the more they could get out of it. The founding faculty in Santa Fe drew their inspiration from Dick Weigle’s vision of multiple campuses of St. John’s.”

Tom Slakey (H94), tutor emeritus and former dean of the Annapolis campus, recalls Weigle’s commitment to the Program: “He was passionate about liberal education in the St. John’s way, and he just thought it should be offered to more people. When we couldn’t accommodate as many students as wanted to come in [Annapolis], that’s when he wanted to come out and start this new college.”

or came to the campus in the following three years. She expanded the project to include board members, campus benefactors, the current dean and president, and a few alumni.

“What we’ve got is a treasure trove of memories and reflections,” says Hauer. “The goal for the 50th anniversary is to disseminate these recordings as much as we can. But the database will stay with the college after the celebration as an archive we can use to remember our history.”

The treasures she has collected include tutor Roger Peterson (H94) and former buildings and grounds journeyman Johnny Zamora reflecting on the campus’s early culture of pranks, tutor Ray Davis discussing the summer senior program,



Clementine Peterson (H88)

Hauer's interviews capture this passion and include stories of how Santa Fe tutors reworked junior math, developed the biology and chemistry sequences in lab, and had the Evans Science Laboratory built with private lab spaces for students to pursue independent research. Stories from later years show how the Santa Fe faculty continued to innovate, creating the Graduate Institute and later its Eastern Classics program, Summer Classics for the community, and the art program that was on the curriculum from 1990 to 2003.

In his interview, Warren Winiarski (Class of 1952) and founder of Stag's Leap Wine Cellars, draws Hauer's attention to the carvings in the beams in the new Winiarski Center, which



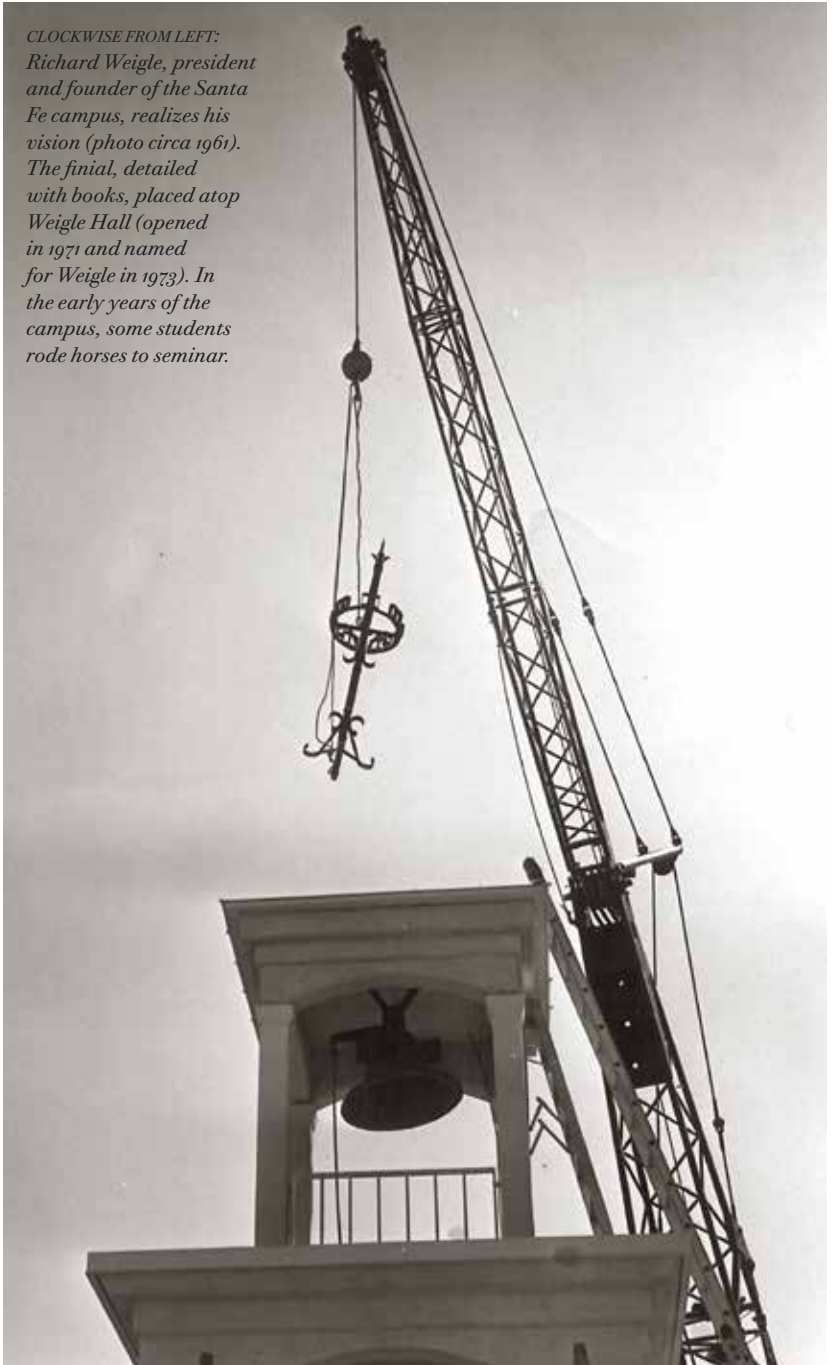
depict animals that undergo a metamorphosis: frogs from tadpoles, butterflies from moths, dragonflies from larvae. While the carvings reflect the transformative effects of a St. John's education, Hauer notes that the view from the Center, like the view from the dining hall, also matches the transformative spirit of the Santa Fe founders. "The view is meant to show the skyline and the hills behind, which is an aspirational vision that you see with that background of hills reaching up and pointing toward heaven," Warren explains. "It's a kind of American Indian vision, which I believe is meant to suggest reaching upward beyond yourself to what is above and beyond." □

Alumni are invited to participate in the oral history project; please contact: SantaFe.alumni@sjc.edu. The College magazine will celebrate Santa Fe's 50th in the next issue; if you are from one of the early classes (1960s-70s) and wish to share a story please email: TheCollegeMagazine@sjc.edu.

"I can remember times I would ride home after seminar. It was a nine-mile ride each way and I would go out and saddle my horse and go home in the complete dark down the arroyo behind school... I remember the ice cracking under the horse's hooves... the sense of solitude... and how welcoming it was to come up over the hill about three or four miles down and see the lights..."

— DON COOK (H97), TUTOR AND FORMER ASSISTANT DEAN

CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT:
Richard Weigle, president
and founder of the Santa
Fe campus, realizes his
vision (photo circa 1961).
The finial, detailed
with books, placed atop
Weigle Hall (opened
in 1971 and named
for Weigle in 1973). In
the early years of the
campus, some students
rode horses to seminar.





Johanna Omelia (SFGI03) Michael Waldock (SFGI03): Come Fly With Us!

CELEBRATING A DECADE SINCE its original date of publication, *Come Fly With Us! A Global History of the Airline Hostess: Tenth Anniversary Edition* (Ailemo Books, 2013) provides a colorful history of the airline hostess in “an industry started by a woman for women,” according to its authors Johanna Omelia (SFGI03) and Michael

Us! shows how uniforms played an integral part in this image, incorporating stylish and innovative elements that reflected high fashion as well as evolving social mores. This expanded edition highlights “even more coverage of the 1960s, when, astoundingly, women wore hot pants and short (flammable) paper dresses,” says Omelia. Waldock’s interest in flight attendants began in this decade, when he first came to California from England. “When he changed planes, the stewardess kissed him,” says Omelia. “I was never kissed by a flight attendant, but I think the history of working women around the



Waldock (SFGI03). Beautifully illustrated with more than 200 images of commercial airline advertisements and archival photos, this expanded edition documents the industry’s 83-year history, during which flight attendants have been the face of the airline companies. The book explores the social, economic, and political trends that have affected the role of the airline hostess as well as the public’s ever changing perception of sky travel. In addition, the book features flight attendants’ stories about the early days of aviation.

Come Fly With Us! traces the profession’s origin to 1930, when a young Iowan named Ellen Church convinced an airline executive to hire her, thus becoming the world’s first airline hostess. In the 1930s, Church and seven other stewardesses—known as the Original Eight—represented United Airlines and established the foundation of passenger care and safety standards. They were registered nurses whose duties included repairing loose seats, loading baggage, soothing nervous passengers, and even touching up paint on planes.

For the next two decades, flight attendants were cabin safety professionals, thoroughly trained in safety procedures. In the 1950s, they were viewed as the “perfect wife,” celebrated in the media for being “as adept at warming a baby’s bottle as mixing a martini.” The Swinging Sixties and Groovy Seventies saw flight attendants as sex symbols, marketed to lure passengers aloft. *Come Fly With*

Boeing’s 747 elevated the status of air travel; passengers could book tables for dinner, view in-flight movies, and gather around a piano for a song or two—in Coach!

world over the decades is fascinating.”

As the book points out, the advent of the first “jumbo jet,” Boeing’s 747, elevated the status of air travel; passengers could book tables for dinner, view in-flight movies, and gather around a piano for a song or two—in Coach! However, in 1978 the airline industry was deregulated, resulting in an influx of new carriers, furious competition, the collapse of some established companies, and, ultimately, decreased legroom and in-flight amenities that remains the standard today.

In January 2014, Omelia and Waldock launched the online publication, *Come Fly With Us Magazine*. The premier issue features articles on 1970s Hawaiian Airlines fashion, travel in Iceland, and more. Read the magazine at www.comeflywithusmagazine.com.

—Gregory Shook

Anne Leonard (A89) and John C. Wright (A84): Storytelling and Sensawunda



WHEN IT COMES TO STORYTELLING THAT INVOLVES princes, dragons, and sorcery, “avoiding stereotypes is a challenge,” says Anne Leonard (A89), a lawyer-turned-writer who lives in Northern California. To keep it fresh, Leonard infuses her debut novel *Moth and Spark* (Viking Books, 2014), with colorful details from her life. “The book has an entire chapter that takes place at a ball, which is influenced by St. John’s waltz parties in Annapolis,” says Leonard. Fantasy devotees and readers beyond her intended demographic can appreciate the novel’s nuanced characters and panoramic prose. “[*Moth and Spark*] was written as a love story for a niche audience: teenage girls and young women,” says Leonard. “But I’ve been thrilled and amazed by the response from middle-aged guys!”

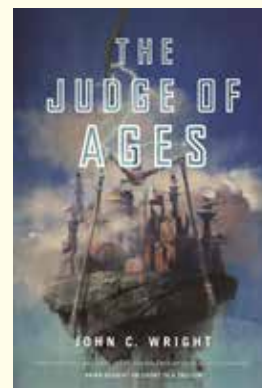
In her book, a young prince, Corin, and Tam, a doctor’s daughter, are torn between Corin’s quest to free dragons from an evil

Empire and their mission to save their country on the brink of battle. Leonard embraces fantasy’s most compelling elements: intrigue, magic, war, and forbidden romance. “Conventions put a [story] structure in place,” says Leonard, an avid reader of fantasy fiction. She also looks beyond fantasy for inspiration, observing authors such as Jane Austen, Charlotte Brontë, and W. B. Yeats to create archetypal and distinctive characters. “I try to put my own twist on the fantasy genre,” says Leonard, who models her novel’s heroine on Elizabeth Bennet, the protagonist of *Pride and Prejudice*. Leonard also gives a nod to contemporary best-selling works such as *The Hunger Games* and the *Twilight* saga; there is a heated romantic tension between Prince Corin and Tam, *Moth and Spark*’s dual protagonists. “I wrote this book for my 15-year-old self,” says Leonard. “I always liked making up characters.”

“I get my ideas from the subconscious mind, the persistence, the work—and the muse Sensawunda.”

SCIENCE FICTION AUTHOR JOHN C. WRIGHT’S (A84) highly-anticipated *Judge of Ages* (Tor Books, 2014) is a space opera for the ages. In this third volume in his Count to the Eschaton Sequence, Wright says that science fiction’s hallmarks of “the gigantic, the over-the-top, with extreme villains and lots of action” are abundant. “The term space opera is a little tongue-in-cheek. Being a St. John’s graduate, I write philosophy, deep thought, and other abstract theory into my stories. But entertainment is the first priority. I want to beguile on an idle afternoon.”

Set in the year AD 10,515, the novel centers on two adversaries who endeavor—each in their own different ways—to thwart an alien threat, the Hyadas Armada, headed to Earth to assess humanity’s value as slaves. In *Judge of Ages*, opposing leaders Ximen del Azarchel and Menelaus Montrose ultimately converge in a climactic battle, replete with hi-tech weaponry and cliometric calculus, for the



fate of the planet and its human inhabitants.

At its core, the story is conventional science fiction, riffing from legendary authors such as Isaac Asimov, widely regarded

as a master of science-fiction storytelling. “On some level, though, my attitude and personality come through,” says Wright. “I get my ideas from the subconscious mind, the persistence, the work—and the muse Sensawunda.” Sensawunda, or “sense of wonder,” is one of science fiction’s defining characteristics. “The sense of wonder of science fiction differs from other natural wonders or personal miracles in a man’s life—the wonders of first love, or childbirth, and so on,” says Wright. “Science fiction concerns only those specific wonders that are not eternal and not known to all men.”

—Gregory Shook

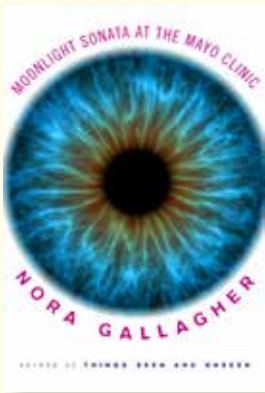


Bliss

By Hilary Fields (SF97)
Redhook Orbit (Hachette Book Group), 2013

Santa Fe-based writer Hilary Fields (SF97) wrote her first novel at age 16 and later penned three historical romances under another name; today she continues the bliss of reading and wordplay. A voracious reader since childhood, Fields cites Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* and Douglas Adams's *Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* as her all-time favorites. Set in the City Different, her new novel, *Bliss*, centers on

Serafina Wilde, a pastry chef whose seemingly perfect life begins to unravel. Her eccentric Aunt Pauline comes to the rescue when she offers to let her take over the family business, "Pauline's House of Passion," and turn it into a bakery, so long as she retains the shop's "adult store" in the back room. Throughout the novel, Fields makes clear her love of baking; the book is chock-full of sumptuous descriptions of gooey pastries and other delectable baked goods. But food is secondary to the novel's exploration into matters of the heart: finding courage, friendship, family, and self-discovery.

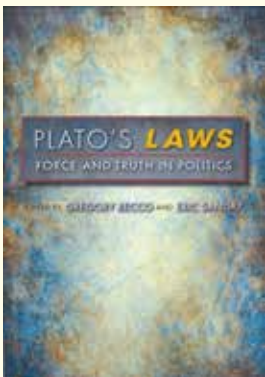


Moonlight Sonata at the Mayo Clinic

By Nora Gallagher (SF70)
Alfred A. Knopf, 2013

Anyone who has experienced a baffling illness or struggled to have a health condition diagnosed may well empathize with Nora Gallagher's (SF70) journey recounted in her new memoir, *Moonlight Sonata at the Mayo Clinic*. A preacher-in-residence at Trinity Episcopal Church in her hometown of Santa Barbara, California, Gallagher begins her quest in 2009, when a routine eye exam reveals an inflamed optic nerve, a mysterious condition called optic neuritis. The cause is unknown, and if left untreated, it can lead to total vision loss.

Gallagher set off on a yearlong search to find a diagnosis and treatment for her mysterious condition. A meditation on faith, spirituality, and vulnerability, the memoir is structured in three sections—"Drowning," "Limbo," and "Recalled to Life"—each chronicling significant phases of her pilgrimage. Devoid of sentimentality, she candidly describes her encounters with the marvels and madness of the modern medical system and illuminates the sometimes dark path that ultimately leads her to the renowned Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota, a place built for those seeking answers and cures. "It's the nature of things to be vulnerable," says Gallagher. "The disorder is imagining we are not."



Plato's *Laws*: Force and Truth in Politics

Edited by Gregory Recco and Eric Sanday
Indiana University Press, 2013

For this collection of 14 interpretive essays by as many authors, editors Gregory Recco, an Annapolis tutor, and Eric Sanday, an assistant professor of philosophy at the University of Kentucky, organized a team of scholars. Due to its length and density, this work of Plato's is not as well studied as the others. This volume looks at all the individual books of the dialogue and reflects on the work as a whole. Rather than provide interpretation of every

detail, the contributing authors explore the facets of the text that they found to be most interesting and rich. In addition, they read drafts of each other's essays and, in some cases, included responses to other essays within their own compositions. Although its contributors come from different backgrounds and concentrations, this collection has a sense of connectedness throughout. Both newcomers and veterans of the *Laws* can discover fresh and valuable insight into Plato's work, reminding us of its relevance today.

—Erin Fitzpatrick (A14)

1946

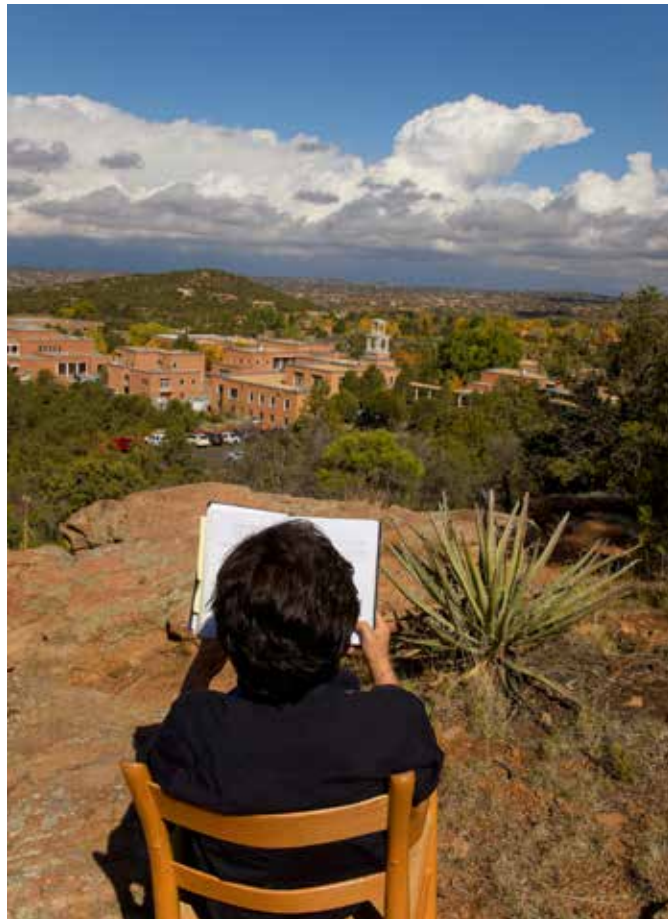
Peter J. Davies, Class of 1948, writes, “**Peter Weiss** (A) was honored on April 2, 2014, at a reception following a forum on *Law’s Imperative: A World Free of Nuclear Weapons*, which examined the current state of the law on nuclear weapons and what needs to be done to bring the obligation to fruition. The event recognized Weiss’s contribution to nuclear disarmament and the rule of law, and raised funds for the future

work of the Lawyers Committee on Nuclear Policy (LCNP), which he co-founded in 1981. He retired in 2013 as president, having served in that position since its founding. Weiss and LCNP played a key role in the 1996 advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice at the Hague, which held unanimously that ‘there exists an obligation to negotiate in good faith for the total abolition of nuclear weapons.’”

1952

A Contemplative Life

Pierre Grimes (A) reflects: “In 1948, my freshman year, I discovered in Plato’s *Parmenides* the roots of a profound metaphysics. In his *Republic*, I found the primary role of dreams, dialectic, and contemplation. Clearly, with the Dark Ages we lost that legacy.” In 1961, while earning his PhD from the University of the Pacific’s graduate school, the American Academy of Asian Studies, Grimes studied the Buddhist philosopher Nagarjuna, and, with Zen, contemplation. The publication of Grimes’s 1961 study of the *Alcibiades* dialogue in *Yale Journal, QJSA*, marked the beginning of his “philosophical counseling,” says Grimes, “as philosophical midwifery. Later, as the founder of the international philosophical movement, American Philosophical Practitioners Association, I have given more than 20 demonstrations and papers at international conferences held at the University of Liverpool, Oxford University, the University of Athens, the University of Vancouver, and the University of Ontario. In 1978, I founded the Noetic Society, Inc., for the Study of Dialogue and Dialectic, and directed its Philosophical Midwifery Program, which included dream study. In 1983, I joined with Chong-An S’nim of the Korean Chogyue Ch’an Sect to form the Opening Mind Academy, which joined the Platonic tradition with Buddhism. Chong-An sealed me as Hui-An, his Dharma Successor and master dharma teacher. In his autobiography, *In My Own Way*, Alan Watts described me as a Jnana Yogi who ‘comes to an authentic realization, or satori, by an intellectual rather than an emotional or physical discipline.’”



1966

Julia du Prey (née Busser) (A) writes, “I now have four grandchildren who keep me feeling young. Last October, I was in Bhutan on a special tour, hiking to remote monasteries and temples in this very Buddhist country. My cousin, Ian Baker, was the tour leader, a Buddhist scholar and mountaineer. Otherwise, my life has continued more or less predictably. I still sing and play the flute, do some writing, and participate in a philosophy study group.”

1967

Sandra Hoben’s (A) volume of poetry, *The Letter C*, will be published by the Ash Tree Poetry Series in 2014.

1969

Lee McKusick (SF) writes, “My partial (three years) St. John’s education continues to fiercely interact with my Cal State Los Angeles American Studies education. I am in my third career as a paraeducator working with children. One of the language problems I have run into (with a nod to Wittgenstein) is how to describe a young person without

Class of 1969 Memory Book Celebrates 45 Years



To celebrate their 45th class reunion, members of the Class of 1969 are invited to share their memories for an online memory book. **Joseph Baratta** (A) will assemble the book, which will be shared with alumni at Homecoming 2014 in Annapolis from September 12 to 14. Alumni may submit text as well as a photo or two. He suggests you answer questions such as: How has the college influenced your life? What memories of the years in college particularly stand out in your mind? Where have your travels taken you?

Send your responses to:
Joseph P. Baratta
32 Hilltop Circle
Worcester, MA 01609
508-756-6015
josephbaratta@mac.com

using the painfully closed phrase, 'severely mentally disabled.' Every day I bring both a scientific and emotional attentiveness to my work with individual special-education children. I am often puzzling over the learning pathways. For these children, learning is a physical process. While most of what I do is simply caring for kids and keeping them safe, I get to see learning as an interaction between brain, memory, senses, and muscles. I have been studying human motor-skill development to provide words and ideas to clarify what I observe in my students. A side puzzle: Where and how do disabled and slightly disabled children show up in the great books and other classical literature? Where are portrayals of children with cerebral palsy, non-verbal conditions, and autistic behaviors? What are some of the books that explore how the classical Athenian Greek culture reckoned with the Spartan Greek infant practices? Separately, I recently ran for a local elected office [in San Mateo County, Calif.], and had the fascinating experience of knocking on doors and establishing face-to-face political understanding with hundreds of voters. Others running for the same position outspent me by an enormous margin. While I did not win, I drew a fair number of community votes."

1971

Victoria Manchester Garrison (SF) completed reading *All On Fire*, the inspiring biography of the abolitionist, William Lloyd Garrison, her ancestor by marriage. She is frequently in Taos doing grandmother volunteering at the Waldorf School.

1975

"Stone Boat's" Personal Best



Annapolis Alumni Director **Leo Pickens** (A78) writes, "Kudos to **Mike 'Stone Boat' Van Beuren** (A) on his personal best performance at the Head of the Charles Regatta held on October 19, 2013. Stone Boat finished sixth in a field of more than 50 competitors in the Men's Veteran I & II Single Sculls with a P.R. [Personal Record] of 20 minutes and 5 seconds." Commenting on the photo from the race, Van Beuren says, "I had just made a move to the inside of the long turn at mile two here. The wake of the boat in front is visible to the right. I was by him 300 meters later."

1973

Since June 2013, **Constance McClellan** (SF) has been serving a two-year term in Moldova with the Peace Corps. She is working with Moldovan teacher partners as an English teacher for grades 5 - 12 in a village of 7,000 outside of the capitol city of Chişinău. Although Moldova may be Europe's poorest country, Connie enjoys the Internet, hot water, Western toilets, and excellent Eastern European food, including homemade wine. After almost a year and much language training, she is finally beginning to understand conversations in Romanian, and to be more or less understood when speaking about concrete things (or about matters with lots of English cognates). Read her blog at cdmcclellan.wordpress.com.

1978

The 35th class reunion also capped off 30 years of international living and banking work for **Chris Olson** (A), and 12 years of evaluation work at the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development in London, England. (The curious can read his study of "EBRD's Response to the 2008-09 Financial Crisis" at www.ebrd.com/downloads/about/evaluation/1011.pdf.) In the evenings, he practices as a trainee psychotherapist with the Independent Group of Analytical Psychologists (IGAP.org), in the classical tradition of Carl Gustav Jung, who discovered psychological types (familiar as Myers-Briggs typology) and the collective unconscious. He hopes to complete the training within four years and to practice analytical psychology at his home in Rotherhithe, London.



1979

To Greece and Back

Karen Bohrer (Anderson) (A) writes, “After 12 years living and working in Greece, first at the American College of Thessaloniki and then at the American School of Classical Studies at Athens, I have repatriated. I am now the collections assessment and development librarian at Worcester Polytechnic Institute in Massachusetts. It’s a big change in ever so many respects, but I’m jumping in with both feet, knowing it’s never the same river. Before I left Greece, I had a wonderful experience related to the college. A friend in the U.S. had advised a young acquaintance who was traveling through Europe to look me up when she got to Athens, and she came to see me at the library of ASCSA, expressing a particular interest in the ancient authors. When I asked why, **Zara Amdur** (SF11) revealed the name of her alma mater. Neither of us was aware until that moment that we were both alumnae. Despite our circumstantial differences, age being not the least among them, the shared experience of St. John’s enabled us to immediately connect on the human and intellectual levels that matter. E-mail is probably the best way to reach me for anyone who’d like to. My addresses are karenbohrer@yahoo.com or kmbohrer@wpi.edu.”

1982

Rob Crutchfield (A) has started an online fundraising effort to help **Ruth Johnston** (A85), who has a debilitating illness. For more information, visit www.gofundme.com/help-ruth-johnston.

1983

Désirée Zamorano (SF) writes that her novel, *The Amado Women*, a family drama, will be published in summer 2014.

1984

Pedro J. Martinez-Fraga (A) writes, “I am pleased to announce that, effective March 17, 2014, C. Ryan Reetz and I have opened a Miami office for the law firm of Bryan Cave LLP, a leading international law firm with offices across the United States, as well as in Europe and Asia. The firm’s commitment to its ‘one firm’ culture has resulted in a strong track record of collaboration and cooperation across the firm, with obvious benefits for clients that have endured since its founding 141 years ago. We will be continuing our existing practice at

Bryan Cave, focusing on international and domestic litigation, arbitration, and regulatory disputes. Ryan will serve as the Miami office’s managing and hiring partner, and I will serve as co-leader of the firm’s international dispute resolution practice (together with Rod Page).”

1988

Tobias Maxwell’s (A) fifth book, 1977: *The Year of Leaving Monsieur*, was published in March 2014.

1993

Inspired from her own experience, **Rachel Blistein** (A) launched her hair-care business, Original Moxie, in 2009. She credits her ability to teach herself basic chemistry and to formulate complex hair-care products to her St. John’s education. “The process of reading original texts on subjects from ancient Greek to advanced physics gives you the tools to learn anything,” says Blistein. “It also breaks down the fear of tackling a totally foreign subject from scratch and without intermediaries. Once you get over that fear, it opens up a whole new world of possibilities.” Visit the company’s online store at www.originalmoxie.com.





1997

In addition to running her bee farm (www.ziaqueenbees.com) and having her second child a couple of years ago, **Melanie Kirby** (SF) served as the president of the Western Apicultural Society of North America in 2013. Currently she is the editor for an online beekeeping newsletter with more than 30,000 subscribers (www.kelleybees.com). She started the Rocky Mountain Survivor Queenbee Cooperative, which is an educational service organization helping to build capacity for local pollinator preservation, promotion, and production. She shared their efforts at the 2013 Apimondia World Beekeeping Conference in Kiev, Ukraine. This spring she organized the 2014 North to South New Mexico Pollinator Benefit Lecture series, bringing pollinator scholars to the Land of Enchantment. St. John's hosted a lecture by Dr. Thomas Seeley, a world-renowned conservation biologist from Cornell, on May 3, 2014. More information: www.survivorqueenbees.org. Kirby is buzzed to be sharing her apicultural academia with her beloved alma mater.

1998

In fall 2013, Santa Fe Advancement Services Director **Nick Giacona** (SFGI) returned as guest lecturer to a Native American music class at the University of Oklahoma. He discussed the mythology behind some of the ceremonial music and dance the class was studying. He led the class in a comparative mythology exercise by examining the local differences and universal similarities between the Native American Corn Maiden myths and the Classical Greek myths of Demeter and Persephone. On the home front, Nick's daughter, Sarah, graduated from New Mexico State University last spring with a degree in fashion design. She begins an internship with the Walt Disney Company in January. His son, Kyle, has been accepted to the University of Hawaii for the spring semester; he plans to major in food science and human nutrition, with an emphasis in sports and wellness. Nick and his wife, Keiko, are looking forward to becoming "empty-nesters." (Don't tell Sarah and Kyle.)

Correction: Richard Field (SFGI) writes, "I received my PhD in 1993 from the University of New Mexico in health, physical education, and recreation, not history and philosophy as stated in the fall 2006 issue of The College."

1999

On October 1, 2013, at Camp Pendleton, **Major Benjamin I. Closs, USMC** (A) received a medal for outstanding meritorious service while serving as the Executive Senior Briefer, Intelligence Department, Headquarters Marine Corps, Washington, D.C., from July 1, 2010 to June 30, 2013.

Mike Soejoto (A) and **Abby Soejoto** (A) write, "We had another baby—Peter Dominic, born March 6—who slots in at the bottom of the totem pole after Lucy (10), John (8), Cecilia (6), James (4), and Beatrice (2), but ahead of McDuff the dog. Abby continues to homeschool the kids. Mike is partner at Pircher, Nichols, & Meeks in Century City and is head of the firm's tax department. The older kids are playing

club soccer, which keeps us busy and on the road most weekends. We are excited to celebrate our 15th wedding anniversary this summer. Feel free to drop us a line, especially if you will be in Los Angeles: asoejoto@gmail.com and msoejoto@gmail.com."

Dana (Ostrander) Warford (A) and her husband, Mark, welcomed their daughter, Peyton Avery, into the world on July 30, 2013.

2001

Paige Maguire (A), who still lives in Austin, Texas, has remarried. In December 2012, she and Kevin M. Schneider, a composer and producer, welcomed a son, Asa Wilder, who joins his older brother, Daschel Auden Maguire, now 11. Paige is senior strategist at Springbox Digital Partners in downtown Austin. She is also @fluxistrad on Twitter.



Cosmina Popa (A) is managing director at Conscious Venture Lab (CVLab), a new impact-focused



Mike and Abby Soejoto (Agg) are homeschooling their family.

business accelerator being created in conjunction with the Howard County Economic Development Authority and the Maryland Center for Entrepreneurship. Their goal is to create new businesses that operate at the intersection of profit and purpose, using the power of capitalism to create a more joyful, just, and equitable society. For more information, visit www.conscious-venturelab.com.

2002

Ronald Osborn's (AGI) new book, *Death Before the Fall: Biblical Literalism and the Problem of Animal Suffering*, was published in February.

Shelley Saxen (née Walker, SFGI, ECo3) and her husband, **Doug Saxen** (ECo3), are starting their third and final year living in Peru. Shelley covers human rights and social conflicts as a diplomat with the U.S. Department of State. Doug continues his love of writing and has been dedicated to his new digital illuminated manuscript project. They hope to be back in Santa Fe later this year for a visit and always joyfully welcome Johnnie visitors to Peru.

Lauren Shofer (A) is living in Aalst, Belgium, where she is a chiropractic physician and mother of four: Amelie (5), Julien (4), Emile (2), and Celestine (7 months). Her husband, Baldwyn Bourgois, is also a chiropractic physician.

2005

On February 18, **Samantha Buker** (A) got a request from the director of Lyric Opera Baltimore: "Are you interested in being a lissome Hebrew maiden in *Nabucco*?" Given her wonderful first time onstage last year in the Belle Époque house, how could she resist a reprise?

Thanks to that fateful debut in *Rigoletto*, she fell into the arms of a British baritone. His role in Act I was to grab her as she was about to deck the reprobate Duke across the face with a right hook—and drag her, kicking and flailing, off stage right. Helluva first meeting. The baritone, an Oxford man, is a chorister and a Catholic. Ms. Buker would like to take a moment to thank Mr. Tomarchio for his Thomas Aquinas preceptorial, since the sacred, the profane, and the reason lying underneath come up quite a bit with her fancy man. Who knows, she may have to move to London yet... and nay, even confess? Next up, Santa Fe tutor Jacques Duvoisin and she have been compiling an anthology about St. John's College, with a working title, *The Selected Life*. It'll be chock full of essays from tutors, alums, current students, and others with an abiding relationship with St. John's. The project was the positive outcome of various Facebook interactions in which dissatisfied alums were offering no active solutions to telling the "story" of SJC. "If there's one thing I learned



LEFT: *Samantha Buker (A05) shines in the 2013 production of Rigoletto at Baltimore's Lyric Opera.* ABOVE: *Celebrating at the Nabucco cast party.*

from seminar, it's that saying what something is NOT, is not the same as saying positively what it IS," says Buker. Incidentally, her nine-to-

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five financial publishing gig still goes gangbusters, and she's on the board of PostClassical Ensemble, the D.C.-based orchestra, which is enjoying its 10th-anniversary season. She's pleased to announce her involvement in the newest thing in so-called "classical" music: Future Symphony Institute. This "think tank" for music provides innovative research and new initiatives whose impact reverberates from her Mt. Vernon neighborhood around the world. *Au fond de l'Inconnu pour trouver du nouveau...*

In what time might be called spare, Samantha runs a portrait studio (photography, drawings, paintings) and can be reached for sittings via 7veilsstudio@gmail.com.

Generous Leadership

BY CHELSEA BATTEN (A07)



Jamaal Barnes (A10) shines as mentor, musician, and advocate

“THE THING THAT CONNECTS MY LIFE’S ACTIVITIES IS A FIRM COMMITMENT TO SUPPORTING THE HOLISTIC DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH FROM ALL ENVIRONMENTS.”

THOSE WHO GRADUATED WITH JAMAAL Barnes (A10) will remember a highlight of his junior year: he was summoned to the office of President Nelson and informed that he had won the Harry S. Truman Scholarship, commonly viewed as the Rhodes of public service.

“It was funny,” he chuckles, remembering the “hurrahing” of his friends when they found out about it. Looking back, he imparts credit for this accomplishment to those who celebrated with him. “The community at St. John’s is a huge part of why I’m passionate about public service.”

Barnes’s passion for public service has taken him to various parts of the world, as well as deeper into the relationships he has been cultivating since high school. He made progress on his long-term goals by earning an EdM degree

in 2011 at Harvard; he is currently an admissions officer at Harvard Graduate School of Education and proctor at Harvard College. In addition, he serves on the Alumni Advisory Board for the Coca-Cola Scholars Foundation, and as a trustee of the Touchstones Discussion Project (founded by tutors Howard Zeiderman and Nicholas Maistrellis).

“I’d say that the thing that connects my life’s activities is a firm commitment to supporting the holistic development of children and youth from all environments,” Barnes reflects. That key word—environment—gives Barnes’s work in public service a character unique to his field. His insight that personal development is heightened by responding to a given environment’s opportunities and challenges was fostered by his experience with St. John’s College.

The setup for Barnes’s story reads like the opening act of a highbrow comedy. You take a first-generation college applicant with energy, vision, and a 12-year plan to pilot his life. You give him one of the country’s most competitive scholarships, and send him off to an “East Coast” school, launching him on his promising future.

What happens then? This goal-oriented, energetic activist finds himself in the midst of about 500 philosopher-poets who spend hours pondering the question, “What is virtue?”

Of course, Barnes’s story is not extreme. But his choice to attend St. John’s, and the day-to-day experience of life and study at the college, was somewhat lost in translation when he described it to family and friends.

“It’s one thing to be a first-generation college student in a traditional sense; it’s a completely different thing to be a first-generation college student and go to St. John’s,” he says.

Despite the challenges and his expectations of how he would function in the college community, Barnes quickly came to appreciate the opportunity presented by the contemplative framework of learning. “The ability to listen to each other carefully, to take what we’ve learned and cooperate effectively, was something I learned to refine over the next few years. The most wonderful deliverable that came out of it was the Epigenesis project.”

In December 2007, Barnes joined forces with three other Johnnies in creating a leadership and mentoring program for low-income youth in Annapolis. For 10 weeks the following summer, Epigenesis led workshops based on the cornerstone texts of the St. John’s Program, to help participants identify their community’s most urgent needs, and consider what it meant for them to be good citizens.

“It’s hard for me to talk about justice and equality,” Barnes says, “and not think about what goes on at Clay Street. I tried to play that out by being actively engaged in the St. John’s community, as well as being actively engaged in the Annapolis communities.”

Following the success of Epigenesis, Barnes devoted his energies to Crossroads for Kids. As the director of their outdoor youth leadership program, Barnes was repeatedly confronted with a gadfly-like question: “How do you measure growth in leadership behaviors?” In the midst of the rigors of junior year, he was led to answers through several formative influences.

One was Michel de Montaigne, whom Barnes calls—laughing but with perfect sincerity—his “self-help guide” in what it means to be socially responsible. Another was tutor Chester Burke, who offered to reread several Platonic dialogues with Barnes as graduation approached.

“We read the *Apology*, the *Crito*, and three or four other texts, and really struggled with what does it mean to be a person of society? To be good, both to yourself and to others?” Those discussions, Barnes says, exemplified for him the kind of generous leadership he was striving to grasp. He also cites former staff members Maggie Melson and Bronte Jones as profound influences.

“It’s one thing to be a first-generation college student in a traditional sense; it’s a completely different thing to be a first-generation college student and go to St. John’s.”

Barnes says that singing with the college choral group, Primum Mobile, brought him back to the human element of living in community. “One of the most beautiful things about music—in particular, when there are multiple people singing in polyphony—is a moment of unity that’s created. Music can create the ideal community.”

He brings up the example of singing “Sicut Cervus” in Freshman Chorus. “These voices coming together, weaving their ways. You take any line by itself and it’s an individual, but when you tie it all together, it’s this beautiful community, and the remarkable thing is that you don’t have to be great singers. Freshman chorus singing ‘Sicut Cervus’ is just as beautiful as Primum Mobile.” He pauses and adds this amendment: “The tenors can be a little iffy sometimes.”

He pauses again, and when he continues speaking, his voice is choked with emotion. “The fact that music can make me feel like I’m in community with someone, that it can bring about emotions that I can’t articulate in words... I don’t get that sensation with anything else. My hands are actually shaking right now.”

Barnes was also struck by the impact of, as he puts it, “that quiet person in class, [who] opens their mouth one time, and really changes the way thoughts are built in seminar.” It showed him that everyone is able to play a valuable role in shaping a community, whether their strengths are in speaking, doing, listening, or simply waiting for the right moment.

To those students who, like himself, are burning to take their education beyond the conversation and into the greater community, Barnes says that St. John’s provides an important opportunity to generate self-momentum. “If I didn’t go to St. John’s, I wouldn’t have won the Truman, I wouldn’t have won the Reynolds Fellowship in Social Entrepreneurship from Harvard University. If you learn through taking action, the ability to be independent and entrepreneurial in terms of creating opportunities to be active in your community is powerful.”



Wint Huskey (SFGI10) is a writer based in Philadelphia.

Toby Burress (A) and **Alena Sinacola (A)** welcomed their daughter, Jane Woolf Burress, on December 4, 2013, in Cambridge, Mass. Named in honor of Jane Goodall and Virginia Woolf, baby Jane is a delight. Their dogs Charlie and Maggie have accepted the new human into their pack with grace and understanding. In other news, after seven years in the Boston area, they have recently moved to Brooklyn, N.Y. Toby is enjoying his new job as a systems administrator with Google in Manhattan, and both Jane and Alena are having a wonderful time being a baby and a mama, respectively. They'd love to meet up with other Johnnies in the area: alenasinacola@gmail.com.

2006

Aran Donovan (SF) was featured in the annual anthology, *Best New Poets 2013: 50 Poems from Emerging Writers*, edited by Brenda Shaughnessy. Equally exciting, she is now living in New Orleans, where several other '06 and '07 Johnnies have also congregated. Let her know if you're passing through the Big Easy!

2007

Maia (Huff-Owen) Nahele (SF) writes, "I now live in Paris, where I have a research and teaching position in the Department of Philosophy at the Sorbonne (Paris IV). In the whirlwind of the last few years, I've regrettably lost touch with many of you, and welcome the chance to reconnect. I also welcome visitors and passers-through! I am looking to sublet my lovely, quiet, light-filled, one-bedroom apartment in the fourth arrondissement for July and/or August of this year. If there are any Johnnies (students, alumni, faculty, or staff) who would be interested in landing in Paris for the summer and need a fantastic home-base, please drop me a line at mnahele@gmail.com, and I'll send more information."

2010

Wint Huskey's (SFGI) first novel, *Blowin' It*, is scheduled to be published in August.

2008

Aerospace Award



Trystan Popish (SF08) and Carol Mohling at the 2014 NSTA Teacher Awards Gala in Boston, Mass.

Trystan Popish (SF) was selected by the National Science Teachers Association (NSTA) Awards and Recognitions Committee as the recipient for the 2014 Wendell G. Mohling Outstanding Aerospace Award for her exemplary work with informal aerospace science. Popish, an Aviation Learning Center educator at the Museum of Flight in Seattle, Wash., was presented with the award at the NSTA Teacher Awards Gala during the association's national conference held in Boston, Mass., from April 3 to 6.

2012



A New Course

Alexander Schmid (AGI) has joined the faculty at Escondido Charter High School (ECHS), one of the American Heritage family of charter schools

based in Escondido, Calif. Schmid teaches freshman logic and rhetoric—a new course that he developed—and a law and debate elective for juniors and seniors. Shawn Roner, the ECHS Traditional Classroom program director, says that Schmid is a valuable addition to the faculty "because we are focusing more attention on developing student thinking skills in the freshman year." Schmid says, "I was delighted to have the opportunity to teach a subject which I both love and live. When I was offered the position, I knew I had to take it."

Mentoring Women in Business

BY GREGORY SHOOK

Elizabeth Powers (A89) Reveals Hidden Bias in the Workplace



As a senior principal at the New York-based IMS Consulting Group (IMSCG), serving clients that include four of the top 15 pharmaceutical companies, **ELIZABETH POWERS** (A89) has followed a career trajectory full of twists

and bends. At one point, her plans were nearly derailed altogether. “I had a daughter early in my career at Booz & Company (formerly Booz Allen Hamilton),” says Powers, who spent nearly 13 years with the company, working her way up from associate to vice president and partner. “When I came back [to work], there weren’t that many options for alternative schedules.” Powers soon learned how hidden biases, or unconscious bias—an implicit preference for certain types of people based on their upbringing, gender, race, experience, and values—can influence important decisions, such as hiring, promotions, assignments, performance reviews, and dismissals.

For the next six months, Powers shuttled back and forth between New York and Chicago “on a team that wasn’t particularly family friendly.” With the pressure to succeed at her job at the expense of spending considerable time apart from her husband and newborn daughter, Powers says that she nearly imploded. When she was on the brink of leaving the company, a colleague came to her support as both a mentor and a champion. Recognizing that Powers had been put in an unfair situation based on her

circumstances as a new mother rather than her talent and ability, “he convinced the firm to keep me and for me to stay on part-time,” says Powers, who continued to work part-time with the company for the next five years. “That never would’ve happened without that particular champion.”

That experience helped Powers become aware of hidden biases and their potential impact on a person’s career. “Integrity and equality are always at the forefront of my mind,” says Powers. “Both men and women carry around unconscious bias which says that women don’t belong in the workplace. It’s quite acceptable now to be a woman as an entry-level associate or a mid-level manager, but it’s still very hard [for women] to rise to the top ranks.” To thwart the trend, Powers is coordinating a women’s initiative at IMSCG to empower future business leaders to become champions of their own careers and to raise awareness of unconscious bias in the workplace. “I’m in a client service field, and I love what I do,” says Powers, whose work on unconscious bias is a topic at the forefront of many large businesses today.

A *Wall Street Journal* article (January 9, 2014) reports that as many as 20 percent of large U.S. employers who offer diversity training programs now provide unconscious-bias training.

“Integrity and equality are always at the forefront of my mind.”

Powers looks at what other companies are doing in terms of shedding light on hidden biases in the workplace—in particular, understanding communication style.

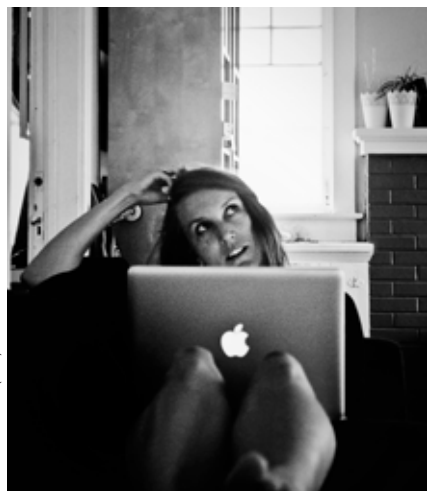
“It can be challenging to coach others to hit the right level of assertiveness without being too assertive,” she says. “There’s a different solution for everybody.”

Inspired by Robert Greenleaf’s book, *Servant Leadership*, Powers advocates mentorship and the idea of a servant actually being a leader. “That’s at the core of how I operate,” she says. “I wish I could do that a lot better with my family, but when I manage to do it, I’m always successful.” A graduate of the Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania, she mentors Wharton students and alumnae but is “even happier to mentor Johnnies. [Mentoring] is absolutely a way of paying back into the karma bank,” says Powers. “And it’s just fun.”

Whether with her family, at the workplace, or at her Brooklyn *dojang* (Powers is a red belt in hapkido), Powers says that being successful means “living up to my commitments. I was given many gifts, both in terms of talent and in terms of people who have cared for me. It’s all about how I can live up to those gifts.” □

A Good Conversation Is Hard to Find

By Chelsea Batten (A07)



"It's HARD TO FIND A GOOD CONVERSATION, after St. John's." This was the warning delivered by Dr. Bernard Davidoff (A69)—or, as classmates of his daughter knew him, Bernie. He would say it while casting a long glance around the perimeter of the quad, part resigned, part wistful, and part something else that I never could define.

It's only now, seven years out from the college, that I realize what he meant.

First, there's the deflated anticipation that follows most Johnnies after attending their first Homecoming or croquet match as alumni. There are new kids sitting on your bench, living in your dorm room, occupying your spot on the basketball court or the FSK stage.

The tutors will talk to you, of course, but even that's not the same. Much as you love their appreciation of your life, their undying enthusiasm for whatever you've chosen to do (or your efforts to make a choice), what you really want to talk about with them is what you used to talk about: Great Books.

Many Johnnies experience this, post-graduation. If you don't live within proximity of an alumni group, or can't make it back to your campus for alumni events, you're stuck in that wistful malaise that Bernie was talking about: A good conversation is hard to find.

Two years ago, two alumni, Harry Zolkower (A82) and Nicole Levy (SF92)

decided to do something about this. In collaboration with Annapolis Alumni Director Leo Pickens (A78), they created a virtual format for homesick Johnnies to engage with tutors and with each other.

An online seminar? According to Mr. Pickens, it was a hard sell to many tutors. It's difficult to recreate the magic of seminar by dint of screenshots and earbuds. In addition, says Mr. Pickens, some members of the faculty feel that having different groups of alumni, led each time by different tutors, isn't as pure as the undergraduate experience, the thematic unity achieved by one group that spends a year in discussion together.

But perhaps alumni hunger for a good conversation merits a leap into the digital age. Many first-time participants came to the online seminar I attended with skepticism. "It doesn't surprise me anymore," says Mr. Pickens, chuckling. "But every online seminar I've participated in has that feeling of a genuine St. John's seminar!"

"If you can't get out of the house and cross an easy distance to a room where people are gathered, this is the next best thing. There's a hunger out there for this kind of conversation."

One tutor, Michael Dink (A75), who gave a seminar in March, reported to other faculty members that the reason it felt genuine to him was "because everybody in the seminar is seasoned in this form of conversation."

Admittedly, Mr. Pickens says, nothing can equal the synergy of 12 to 20 minds in a room—despite the technical hiccups: broken audio feeds, the tendency for participants to look at their own faces while talking. (Mr. Pickens chuckles again as he recounts these hiccups.)

"That said," he continues, "folks are getting together and having a St. John's-style conversation—a serious conversation about a difficult reading—in a way that feels genuine to what we try to do in our community. If you can't get out of the house and cross an easy distance to a room where people are gathered, this is the next best thing. There's a hunger out there for this kind of conversation."

The online seminars have attracted alumni as far apart as Karen Immler (AG107), who lives in Slovenia, and Sunny Hills (SF78), who lives in Maui. In the online seminar I attended from Phoenix, Arizona, nine other participants from around the U.S. gathered together with Mr. Pickens and tutor Michael Dink. Mr. Dink chose the book of Jonah as the reading. It was, I thought, a perfect selection—short enough that it was easy to read at the last minute (which, it turns out, is even easier to do when you're not a full-time student), but full of opportunities for contention, thoughtful silence, and questions following upon the one with which Mr. Dink opened: "Why is Jonah angry?"

What followed was, in fact, a powerful rewind to freshman seminar, with all its exaggerated tropes. There were the stock participants: the over-talker, the chronically silent one, the one who consistently brings everyone back to the opening question. There were the outside references, the stalled silences, the odd autobiographical analogy, and the follow-up question that starts as a statement, devolves into a ramble, and ends with a confession that the asker has forgotten the question he intended to ask.

Also true to freshman seminar fashion is the kindly tolerance with which the tutor views the seminar's foibles. Mr. Dink seemed satisfied, even mildly surprised, by the discussion. The online format, he allowed, did lend itself to serial speech-making. "I believe it's important that people be able to interrupt one another in seminar." But, he adds, he's sanguine that online conversations have all the potential



Laurence Nee

AUGUST 5, 2013
Tutor, Santa Fe

In 2005, Laurence Nee (1970-2013) joined the faculty in Santa Fe, where he was treasured for his sense of humor, thoughtful insights, and gift for conversation. The community gathered for a memorial held on November 2, 2013, in the Junior Common Room. Santa Fe President Mike Peters

provided opening and closing remarks. Santa Fe tutors Janet Dougherty, Philip LeCuyer, Michael Ehrmantraut, and Gregory Schneider, along with alumnus Adam Visser (SF11), shared testimonials in honor of their colleague and friend. The following are some remembrances and excerpts from remarks at the service:

“Laurence taught me many things as a teacher, but one thing stands out. He always tried to figure out what made a student care and what things a student cared about. Laurence could also make you laugh, a gift that I appreciate more and more every day. His skill with the quick remark and the friendly jab were to be envied. In some ways, he was one of the best conversationalists that I have ever met.”
– Gregory Schneider, Santa Fe tutor

“Through his efforts as a tutor, my appreciation for a much beloved novel awakened, and my understanding and appreciation continually grows. I will never re-read *Pride and Prejudice* without reflecting upon Mr. Nee’s love and respect for the work. I am eternally grateful.”
– Lealia Nelson (SFG111)

“I had the great pleasure of having freshman summer seminar with Mr. Nee. His presence was felt strongly at every session and his sense of humor—especially his tolerance of what I tried to pass as humor—is something I shall never forget.”
– Nareg Seferian (SF11)

During the five years that he taught at the college and the years that followed, Nee made a remarkable impact on the community as a teacher, colleague, and friend. He is remembered for his extraordinary character and service to the college. “Personally, I have seen in him a kind of answer to a question I consider significant, that I first heard posed several decades ago: ‘Can a Christian be a great-souled man?’ says Santa Fe Dean J. Walter Sterling. “Laurence’s character is, for me, evidence in favor of such a possibility. Be that as it may, what one heard from his colleagues at the memorial was that he possessed an extraordinary range of virtues of character, as well as of intellect, a combination as beautiful as it is rare. He made us a better college.”

The College magazine is grateful to Laurence Nee for his article, “The Greatness of Shakespeare’s Plays,” in the summer 2012 issue.

www.sjc.edu/news-and-media

A Good Conversation (continued from p. 50)

of those that take place in the classroom, if cultivated the same way: “I thought with practice, and experience, participants could get pretty good at it.”

It’s still a young endeavor, and alumni are still being attracted to it. I imagine that as these seminars go on, they will be like the learning curve within a St. John’s class, in which students become stronger, more generous, and honest conversants with each other.

I recognize now that the look on my friend’s father’s face was determination. I’ve found that life after St. John’s requires such resolve, if you’re not going to spend it in perpetual mourning for four irrecoverable years

of community and culture, all intense and endearingly weird, threaded together by a love of deep conversation. In some ways, I’m loath to rejoin the online seminar. Like going back for Croquet or Homecoming, it was hard to revisit that environment without it being exactly the same as I remember. On the other hand, I’m not ready to resign conversation to the past. Like the books themselves, great conversation is a daunting endeavor, especially when displaced by culture and time; nevertheless, it’s worth pursuing. ☞

The next virtual seminar will be in September.
For more information: leopickens@sjc.edu

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Martha B. Jordan (*SFGI86*)

OCTOBER 24, 2013

Martha Black Jordan (1932-2013), alumna and member of the Board of Visitors and Governors, died at her son's home in Coronado, Calif. She was 80.



Jordan was born in Mexico City and educated in the United States. She first visited Santa Fe in the summer of 1980 and fell in

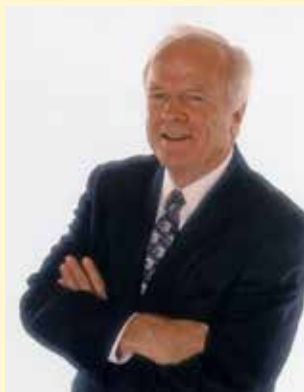
love with the city. As a student at St. John's, her favorite readings were the Russians, especially Dostoevsky. "I like Dostoevsky's view of how the world could be changed, and not necessarily through revolution," she recalled.

Known for her generosity, quiet grace, and inquisitive mind, Jordan was also a gifted poet and translator. She was a founder of the Tramontane Poets of Mexico City, a collective dedicated to being a bridge between the poetry worlds of Mexico and North America. Jordan read her own work, as well as translations, on *The Poet and the Poem*, National Public Radio in Washington, D.C.; at the Society of the Americas and the Poetry Project at St. Mark's Church in New York City; in Mexico City at La Casa del Poeta and the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México; in San Miguel de Allende at the Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes; and at St. John's in Santa Fe.

Jordan committed herself to a long but fulfilling journey when she decided to pursue ordination in the Episcopal Church of Mexico. She enrolled in a graduate pastoral theology program at St. Mary of the Woods College in Indiana. In

John Dendahl (*H87*)

NOVEMBER 9, 2013



John Dendahl (1938-2013), former Board of Visitors and Governors chair, former Santa Fe treasurer, and one of the founders of the St. John's College, Santa Fe campus, passed away in Colorado. He was 75.

Born in Santa Fe, Dendahl attended the University of Colorado in Boulder, where he earned degrees in electrical engineering and business administration. During that time, he won two NCAA titles with the university's

ski team and was a member of the 1960 U.S. Olympic ski team. He was inducted into the University of Colorado Athletic Hall of Fame and the New Mexico Ski Hall of Fame.

In the 1960s, Dendahl worked as an engineer for the Eberline Instrument Corporation (now a subsidiary of the Thermo Electron Corporation) and later became CEO. Later that decade, during an extended absence from the company, he served as chief financial officer for the new St. John's College, Santa Fe campus. From 1985 to 1987, Dendahl served as chair of the college's Board of Visitors and Governors.

Transitioning to a career in politics, Dendahl was appointed to the State Investment Council and later served as secretary of New Mexico's Economic Development and Tourism Department. In 1994, he ran unsuccessfully for governor. However, that same year he was elected as state Republican Party chairman, a position he held until 2003. Several years later, Dendahl and his wife moved to Colorado, where he continued his interest in politics and wrote columns and letters to the editor of *The New Mexican*.

He is survived by his wife, Jackie, and his five daughters: Debra Hadley, Ellie Thurston, Katherine, Karen, and Lisa West.

2006 she was ordained a priest at Christ Church in Mexico City, the church where she was baptized and married. That same year, Jordan and her husband established the Jordan Tutorship on the Santa Fe campus, which has been used to support the director of the Graduate Institute.

She is survived by her husband of more than 50 years, Purdy; three children, Stephanie, Colebrooke, and Robert; and four grandchildren, Cecelia, Daniel, Nicholas, and David.

Jules O. Pagano*Class of 1948*

JULY 14, 2013

Jules Pagano (1925-2013), who helped launch President John F. Kennedy's Peace Corps program, passed away at his home in Jamesville, N.Y., surrounded by family members. He was two days shy of his 88th birthday.

Pagano helped to formulate Peace Corps policies in training and education of volunteers for overseas assignments, and established the first Peace Corps Training Centers. After the passage of the Higher Education Act in 1965, he was named

the first director of the Adult Education Division at the U.S. Office of Education, and began a long career in higher education. Pagano served as dean and associate vice president of Florida International University, during which time he earned his MPA and DPA from Nova University. In 1979, he was recruited by Bard College to serve as vice president and provost of Simon's Rock. He later served as president of the Saybrook Institute, a graduate school and research center.

Pagano and his elder brother, Lee, attended St. John's College in Annapolis, where Pagano's lifelong love affair with education was cemented. He authored dozens of articles on higher education, as well as vocational and adult education. Pagano served as director of the St. John's College Alumni Board from 1984-1988.

He is survived by his wife, Kathy; brother Mo; son Ed; daughters Debbie and Penny; grandchildren Joy, Erin, Elise, Tiffany, and Jack; great-granddaughters Rylee, Ellie, and Arianna; and stepchildren Angela, Jimmy, and Karen.

Robert Stewart (*A09*)

DECEMBER 5, 2013

Born in Winston-Salem, N.C., Robert Stewart (1977-2013) found his home at St. John's, where he explored his many interests and met others who shared and appreciated those interests. "His dream job was to be a tutor at St. John's," says his mother, Brenda Stewart. The community gathered for a memorial held on March 15, 2014, in the Great Hall. "The room was full of laughter and joy, as we all remembered the sting of his wit, the depths of his wisdom, and the warm, all encompassing feeling

of his friendship,” says Elizabeth Burlington (Ao8).

To read remembrances about Robert Stewart, visit www.sjc.edu/news-and-media



Constance Weigle Mann
(SF68)

FEBRUARY 19, 2014

Constance “Connie” Weigle Mann, (1947-2014), daughter of Richard D. Weigle—president of St. John’s College in Annapolis for 31 years, and founder and president of the Santa Fe campus—died at age 67 in Winston-Salem, N.C.

A graduate of St. John’s College in Santa Fe, she had an affinity for the “Land of Enchantment” and cherished her time and the many friends she made there. After graduating, she attended Yale Divinity School, where she met her husband, Tom. She also held a master’s degree from Rutgers University and worked as a sales representative for an organizational management company.

Known for her kindness, generosity, and loving spirit, Connie had a special concern for hunger, and served as a volunteer at the Second Harvest Food Bank of Northwest North Carolina, where she was a Volunteer of the Year in 2013.

She is survived by her husband of 45 years, Tom; her daughter, Mary Liz; her sister, Marta; and countless other family members and friends.

Also Deceased:

Joseph Ablow, *Class of 1950*
November 14, 2012

Rachel Abrams, *A72*
June 7, 2013

George Ackerman, *A74*
January 3, 2014

Lewis Alexander, *Class of 1941*
May 9, 2013

Rodney Arthur, *AGI88*
November 7, 2013

Lydia Aston, *Class of 1955*
December 26, 2013

Roland Bailey, *Class of 1935*
April 22, 2014

Eugene Blank, *Class of 1945*
July 15, 2013

Rosalie Levine Boosin, *Class of 1960*
November 1, 2013

William S. Bradfield, *SFGI79*
January 16, 1998

Wayne Brandow, *Class of 1966*
September 14, 2013

Gerald Buchen, *SF72*
July 31, 2013

Catherine Ann Caffrey, *A69*
February 12, 2014

Richard B. Carter, *Class of 1954*
October 19, 2013

Lindsay Clendaniel, *Class of 1944*
March 10, 2014

Peter Clogher, *Class of 1947*
June 28, 2013

Cornelia Corson-Reese, *Class of 1957*
August 9, 2013

Paul G. Cree, Jr., *Class of 1952*
April 8, 2014

Cyril K. Crume, *SF81*
September 28, 2013

Ellen Nancy Davis, *Class of 1960*
July 15, 2013

Anna Dietz, *AGI80*
February 20, 2013

Ernest Dominguez, *SF95*
August 24, 2013

Paul Ehrlich, *Class of 1942*
October 26, 2013

Arthur Fort IV, *SF91*
December 20, 2012

Douglas Fraser, *AGI90*
February 15, 2014

Charles Gentile, *Class of 1950*
July 24, 2013

Josef Gilboa, *Class of 1962*
December 4, 2013

Raymond Haas, *Class of 1958*
September 1, 2012

Darrell Henry, *Class of 1961*
August 16, 2013

Joseph D. Hines, *SFGI70*
December 27, 2013

Henry DeMuth Jawish, *Class of 1952*
October 21, 2013

George W. John, *Class of 1949*
March 27, 2014

Beverly Kincaid, *SFGI72*
February 11, 2014

Thomas D. Lyne, *Class of 1946*
May 20, 2008

Patrick Ramsey Magee, *SF16*
July 12, 2013

Stephen Mainella, *Class of 1954*
March 4, 2014

Richard T. Mallon, *Class of 1943*
June 9, 2013

John Mark Mason, *A75*
April 10, 2014

Richard Matteson, *Class of 1948*
February 13, 2014

Wilbur Matz, *Class of 1940*
March 29, 2014

David McMorran, *SF75*
February 24, 2014

Grace McNeley, *SFGI75*
July 25, 2013

Harry Neumann, *Class of 1952*
March 31, 2014

Harry O’Neill, *SFGI79*
December 10, 2013

LeRoy Pagano, *Class of 1948*
February 6, 2013

Milton Perlman, *Class of 1943*
February 18, 2014

Emanuel Pushkin, *Class of 1940*
October 24, 2013

Richard Rickard, *SFGI72*
October 24, 2013

Caroline Saddy, *SF81*
March 31, 2013

Roberto Salinas-Price, *Class of 1959*
August 13, 2012

Louis Shuman, *Class of 1938*
August 3, 2013

John E. Siemens, *Class of 1956*
November 5, 2013

Warren Skidmore, *Class of 1947*
December 21, 2013

Robert Snower, *Class of 1944*
July 2, 2013

John M. Sommer, *SFGI90*
May 18, 2013

Edward Paul Thomson, *A80*
October 10, 2013

Judith S. White, *Class of 1964*
May 23, 2013

Cary Wilcomb, *SF79*
March 17, 1987

Norma Eleanor Williams,
Class of 1967
March 19, 2014

Everett Wilson, *Class of 1956*
October 22, 2013

Bernard E. Wolsky, *AGI91*
November 8, 2013

Kevin C. Young, *A78*
June 5, 2013

The Philanthropy of Memory

BY SUSAN BORDEN (A87)

JAMES MCCLINTOCK WAS A MEMBER OF THE Class of 1965 who excelled in mathematics. William O’Grady was a tutor with a strong commitment to helping students in times of need. Kitty Kinzer was a library director on the Annapolis campus who cared for the college community as much as she cared about its collection of books. Tom McDonald was a tutor who enthralled students with his enigmatic but brilliant analyses of poetry. All four were beloved while they lived and all share something in common after their deaths: Each was honored by a memorial endowment fund established by loved ones, contributed to by friends and family, and appropriate to preserve the memory of the way they lived.

Endowment funds are perpetual; they serve as a solid foundation for the college, which spends about five percent annually on the purposes set out by those who establish each fund. The principal remains intact and can grow through market performance or additional gifts to the fund.

For McClintock, who had won both the geometry and the analytical mathematics prizes as a student, the James R. McClintock (1965) Memorial Prize Fund was established to permanently endow the prize for analytical mathematics. For Kinzer, the Kitty Kinzer Library Fund was established to support all aspects of the library’s mission. For O’Grady, the William O’Grady Fund was established to continue his work helping students stay in school when financial concerns put their continued attendance in jeopardy. And for Tom McDonald, a scholarship endowment established in his name means need-based aid for students who could not otherwise afford tuition.

These are just four of more than 400 funds that make up the college’s endowment, and they are among the roughly 10 percent that are memorial funds. These funds serve both as tributes to the people they memorialize and a way for their survivors to channel their grief and ensure that a silver lining accompanies what is usually a very dark cloud.

Dinesh and Jyotsna Pai chose to create such a fund when their daughter Anjali (SFG108) died in a traffic accident



“Anjali believed in paying it forward. She felt that knowledge was to be shared, love was to be shared, affection was to be shared.”

in March 2008, just a few months after she finished her studies at the Graduate Institute. Anjali was teaching in the AVID program with the Santa Fe Public Schools and preparing to move to Japan to teach English. Her parents decided that the fund should be used to support financial aid for Graduate Institute students who plan to become teachers. Her mother explains the decision: “It’s not a profession that will make anybody rich, it’s a profession of the heart. And Anjali was all about heart.”

Lisa Boughter Saporta also chose to create an endowment fund to honor her husband, Larry Saporta (A91), a professor of art history at Rosemont College in Pennsylvania. A few months after Larry’s death in September 2011, Bryan Dorland (A92) contacted her to suggest that they create an endowment fund in Larry’s memory. “I responded without hesitation that it was a great idea,” she recalls. “It was a concrete way to keep Larry’s spirit alive at an institution he cared deeply about. I knew it was

one of the things we could do for Larry that would be truly meaningful for him.”

It turned out to be truly meaningful for Lisa as well, playing what she describes as a tremendous role in processing her grief. She decided that the fund would support scholarships for students who, like Larry, intend to pursue a PhD after graduating from St. John’s. After establishing the fund, Lisa created a website for it (www.lawrencelsaportaphd.org/memorial_scholarship.php).

The Pairs have also found that establishing the fund has helped them in their sorrow. “Grieving is one thing, but keeping Anjali’s memory alive is even more important,” says Dinesh.

Thanks to the permanence of endowment funds, every year, in perpetuity, one student in Annapolis will be named the Lawrence Saporta Scholar, and one student in Santa Fe will be named the Anjali Pai Scholar.

Lisa hopes that future Saporta scholars will share Larry’s enthusiasm for St. John’s College and his love of learning:

The Pairs hope that Anjali’s values will be transmitted along with the scholarship that bears her name: “Anjali believed in paying it forward. She felt that knowledge was to be shared, love was to be shared, affection was to be shared.” ☐

Lecture Fund in Memory of Lieutenant Commander Erik S. Kristensen (AGI00)

Erik S. Kristensen (AGI00)
June 28, 2005

An alumnus of the St. John's College Graduate Institute in Liberal Education and the United States Naval Academy, Lieutenant Commander Erik S. Kristensen died on June 28, 2005, while he led a daring mission in Afghanistan to rescue a four-man SEAL reconnaissance squad engaged in a firefight with Taliban forces. LCDR Kristensen, seven other SEALs, and eight Army

aviators were killed when their helicopter was shot down. Four soldiers fought courageously, though only one survived. The 2007 book and 2013 film *Lone Survivor* tell the story.

In 2013, Michael A. Zampella (A92), a Navy Reserve Lieutenant, founded a lecture series, jointly sponsored by St. John's College and the U.S. Naval Academy, to be held annually at St. John's in Annapolis to honor LCDR

Kristensen's memory. Known for his great love of the arts and literature, Kristensen spoke French and was selected as an Olmsted Foundation Scholar. He planned to attend the Institute of Political Studies in Paris after his tour in Afghanistan.

Kristensen is survived by his father, Edward K. Kristensen, RADM, USN (Ret.), and his mother, Suzanne Carrico Samsel Kristensen, of Washington, D.C.

To make a gift to the Kristensen Lecture Fund, send a check to the college, or use the online giving form for the Annapolis campus at www.sjc.edu. (Select "other" and designate the Kristensen Lecture Fund.)

Milestone Senior Gifts

The 2014 senior classes in Annapolis and Santa Fe are each leaving behind record-high class gifts, thanks to their strong philanthropic spirit and support from college staff and alumni. The Class of 1984 offered a \$2,014 tribute gift when senior classes from both campuses as a whole reached 84% participation. Board of Visitors and Governors member Claiborne Booker (A84) says, "When students both in Annapolis and Santa Fe said they wanted to raise money for student scholarships, [several of us from the Class of 1984] had a thought: What if we could do a little something in tribute to them, some of whom are, in fact, our progeny? At the very least, we share that final digit '4' with them, which means we'll see them at Homecomings to come."

Annapolis seniors raised \$13,792, which will be used to create the Class of 2014 Scholarship Endowment Fund. Santa Fe seniors raised more than \$7,100 for financial aid and scholarships. Although 100% participation has been reached before in Santa Fe (Class of 2002), this was the first time that 100% participation was reached without a single caution deposit gift or pledge. Staff on both campuses also offered generous matching gifts.

Class of 1963 Honors Curtis A. Wilson with Endowment Fund



Curtis A. Wilson
August 24, 2012
Tutor and dean, Annapolis

Inspired by his many contributions to St. John's, and to scholarship in the history of science, members of the Class of 1963 established a fund to honor the memory of Curtis Alan Wilson. Wilson was a world-renowned historian of astronomy who twice served as dean of St. John's College in Annapolis. "It has been

traditional for the 50th anniversary of a class to make some contribution to the college to mark our passage there," note Class of 1963 alumni Robert Thomas and Miriam Duhan in a letter to their classmates. "One that everyone felt we could rally around would be some memorial or tribute to [Curtis], whom almost all of us knew and respected."

The endowment will provide funding for the prize awarded at

Commencement to the student who carries out a fine laboratory project. Members of the Class of 1963 thought offering the prize would recognize Wilson's devotion to the college and his example of scholarship in the sciences.

To read more about Curtis Wilson, visit www.sjc.edu/news/memoriam-wilson.shtml.

To make a gift to the Curtis Wilson Scholarship Fund, send a check to the college, or use the online giving form for the Annapolis campus at www.sjc.edu. (Select "other" and designate the Curtis Wilson Endowment Fund.)

About the St. John's College Endowments

The college has three separate endowments that are composed of more than 400 individual funds: one that benefits the Annapolis campus, one that benefits the Santa Fe campus, and a common endowment that benefits both. The total value of the funds as of June 30, 2013, was about \$145 million. Managed by the Board's Investment Committee, the endowment is invested in diversified products, from equities to bonds to real estate; some alternative and hedge fund investments are also included in the mix. For more information on the funds, please contact Barbara Goyette (A73) at barbara.goyette@sjc.edu in Annapolis and Victoria Mora at victoria.mora@sjc.edu in Santa Fe.

SAVE THE DATE

Homecoming 2014

Annapolis

September 12-14

Santa Fe

September 19-21



Homecoming 2014 is gearing up to be a fantastic weekend for alumni. In addition to the annual Homecoming festivities—seminars, banquets, dancing, student/alumni networking events, and more—both campuses are commemorating special occasions this year that will make your return to St. John's even more fun and memorable. Be a part of celebrating 200 years of the "Star-Spangled Banner" in Annapolis and 50 years of great books in Santa Fe! Please join us and your classmates as we celebrate and support St. John's College. Online registration will open in early June. A special rate is offered to recent alumni. Reserve your lodging accommodations early.

*Sarah Palacios and Leo Pickens,
directors of Alumni Relations*

For more information:
<http://alumni.stjohnscollege.edu>.
Click on "Homecoming"

Annapolis Alumni Office
410-626-2531
Annapolis.Alumni@sjc.edu

Santa Fe Alumni Office
505-984-6103
SantaFe.Alumni@sjc.edu

Alumni Mentors Change Lives



*Annapolis Career Services Director
Jaime Dunn with Hodson interns.*

Many alumni who provide internships for St. John's students find the experience so rewarding that it becomes a lifelong mentorship opportunity. The Hodson Internship Program in Annapolis and the Ariel Internship Program in Santa Fe provide alumni with such opportunities.

Each program offers stipends ranging from \$2,000 to \$4,000 and encourages students to gain practical experience while exploring potential career fields. Alumni-sponsored Ariel opportunities include working with Adam Braus (SF08) at his new computer entrepreneurial venture, 100State, in Madison, Wisconsin and establishing a self-sustaining community garden at Fresno State University with Christina Raines (A12).

Thirty-seven Hodson Internship Program grants were awarded for summer 2014, the most in

the Hodson program's 14-year history; students accepted 31 of the awards. Hodson sites include the National Prison Project with the ACLU in Washington, D.C.; the Center for Cognitive Neuroscience in Philadelphia; the Hainan Provincial Cultural Heritage Research Association in China; and Center Stage in Baltimore.

This summer, four Hodson interns will work with two alumnae: Dr. Rachel Dudik (A02) at the U.S. Naval Observatory and Elisabeth McClure (A08) at Georgetown University's Department of Psychology in its Culture and Emotions lab. Dudik, who has hosted four Hodson interns over the last few years, and McClure, who has hosted three, still keep in touch with past interns. McClure meets every few weeks with Robert Malka (A15) via Skype to analyze data for the survey study he designed while in her lab; they are hoping to present the data as a conference poster sometime in the next year. McClure says that another former Hodson intern, Liyu Jiang (A12), stayed in her lab for nearly a full year as a volunteer before returning to China. "She remains the standard by which we judge research assistants," says McClure. "We often say, 'For this task, we would need a Liyu!'"

TEXAS SUPPORTS SUMMER ACADEMY

The Austin/San Antonio alumni chapter, in an initiative led by Kelly Bradford (SF79), Larry Davis (SFG187), and Paul Martin (SF80), raised scholarship funds for six high school students from the East Central Independent School District to attend this year's Summer Academy at St. John's. The chapter also plans to present

a complete 54-volume set of the *Encyclopedia Britannica's Great Books of the Western World* to one or more underclassmen from the Austin/San Antonio area.

Does your alumni chapter have a story to share? Please send your stories to: thecollegemagazine@sjc.edu



Alumni Association Board President Phelosha Collaros (SF00)

"Alumni are passionate about making sure current students have advantages they didn't have in the past by providing networking and mentorship opportunities. Alumni volunteers also benefit by building their leadership and coaching skills, the ability to recruit for their organization or industry, and the satisfaction of helping someone achieve their goals."

Piraeus 2014

Piraeus is offered several times each year on each campus.

In Santa Fe on August 3-8, Santa Fe tutors Jim Carey (Class of 1967) and Marsaura Shukla (A93) will lead five seminars on selected Greek and Roman *Lives* by Plutarch.

Tuition: \$575 for seminars; \$250 for on-campus housing and meals. Recent alumni (graduates of the classes of 2003 and later) receive a 50% discount on tuition.

Register online: <https://community.stjohnscollege.edu/piraeus2014-august>



CROQUET GOES GREEN

Kudos to the Annapolis Alumni Office, the student Environmental Club, and Ted Canto, general manager of Bon Appétit Dining Services in Annapolis! They took the initiative to make the annual Croquet match an example of sustainability. "Our event sponsor, Waste Neutral, set up several recycle stations around the front campus," says Canto. "By the end of the day, we recycled 4,000 pounds, about two tons, of products."

HOMECOMING BOOK SIGNING

*During Homecoming 2013 in Annapolis, Ruth A. Johnston (A85), Michael Berger (A78), and Jan Lisa Huttner (A73) signed copies of their recent publications. Berger's *Writing Well in School and Beyond* and *Thoreau's Late Career and the Dispersion of Seeds*; Huttner's *Penny's Picks: 50 Movies by Women Filmmakers 2002-2011*; and Johnston's *A Companion to Beowulf and Excavating English*, are available at the Bookstore.*



GARY PIERPOINT

Truth by the Glass



"Red wine is in the realm of Apollo, white wine is in the realm of Dionysus," says August Deimel (SF04) of Keuka Spring Vineyard, New York, one of several alumni winemakers at the second annual Judgment of Annapolis at *In Vino Veritas* on April 25. Representing wineries from California to New York, the event also featured former tutor Abe Schoener (A82) of The Scholium Project; Dan Speck (A96) and Paul Speck (A89) of Henry of Pelham; Christina Turley, daughter of Helen Turley, Class of 1967, and John Wetlaufer, Class of 1967, of Turley Wine Cellars; Rory Williams (A07) of Calder Wine Company; and Zach Rasmuson (A95) of Goldeneye. The group joined a discussion on "Transparency, Truth, and Terroir" and explored the virtue of various grapes, soils, and vines, as participants tasted their wines. "A good wine translates time and space," says David White, founder and editor of the website, *Terroirist.com*; he moderated the discussion.

History-Making Match

BY GREGORY SHOOK

For all its beloved nostalgia, the annual St. John's-U.S. Naval Academy Croquet Match on April 12 broke a few barriers this year: Navy walked off with the Annapolis Cup for the second year in a row. Spectators donned hats as large and colorful as parade floats.



Certain Johnnie traditions still reigned: alumni reunited with friends and faculty, alumni from the Class of 1984 and Class of 2009 hosted friends in courtside tents, the Freshmen Chorus sang a spirited rendition of "St. John's Forever," and the crowd of more than 4,000 spectators in festive attire—top hats, seersucker, feathers, and pearls—gathered for champagne picnics and swing dancing. Imperial Wicket and St. John's junior Samuel Collins (A15) led the charge against Navy after the

Johnnies revealed their uniforms: Greek togas. Bursting through the doors of Barr Buchanan, with mallets hoisted in the air, the Johnnies greeted the cheering crowd. "I wanted something that would make a statement," says Collins. "The togas are a return to our roots." For nearly eight hours, the Johnnies and Midshipmen jousted for the Annapolis Cup, the longest match since the rivalry first began. As the sun set, the Johnnies lost 4-1, though conviviality won the day. ☐

Photos by Anyi Guo (A14)

Leader of Togas

"As I thought about competition and what it means at St. John's, I became more concerned with making sure that everyone just has a good time," says Imperial Wicket Sam Collins (A15) a junior from Fallsington, Pennsylvania. He admits that "it was 'intense to play such a close match again this year.'" Collins and Hector Mendoza (SF14) wowed the crowd with a comeback shot that won the only match in the Johnnies favor.



Secret Weapon from Santa Fe

"Let's make history!" says Hector Mendoza (SF14), a senior from Tucson, Arizona, who flew more than 1,600 miles to play with the St. John's croquet team. He played an amazing game (he calls it "risky") and helped win the first match of the day. "During my junior year in Annapolis, I joined the team, along with this year's Imperial Wicket Sam Collins (A15), and fell in love with the sport. I flew in the night before, so I could help prepare the lawn on the morning of the match. Croquet is the best event at St. John's."





Design Champion

Daniela Lobo Dias (A13) was this year's winner of the annual 2014 Croquet postcard/t-shirt design contest. "I wanted to include the platypus, the unofficial mascot at the Annapolis campus, as its uniqueness and combination of many species suits St. John's students quite well," says Lobo Dias, who plans to attend the New York Film Academy this fall. Lt. Bobby Schmidt, 28th Company officer, happily accepts a t-shirt gift.



Feminine Touch

"Croquet is such a unique aspect of the St. John's life," says Catherine Moon (A14) a senior from Wolcott, Connecticut and one of three women on the team of twelve. "We just had a wonderful team dynamic this year. We're all close friends and like doing things together outside of croquet."

Know Thy Neighbor

Navy Team Captain Midshipmen 1st Class Ryan Lluy and Imperial Wicket Sam Collins (A15) are comrades. "We played a match or two against each other last year, so we're friendly," says Collins. "He is a great competitor and a good guy."



Navy's Secret Weapon

Surprise! Navy alumnus, Dr. Ed O'Loughlin from Hunt Valley, Maryland, has recently begun mentoring both the Navy and the St. John's croquet teams. "St. John's students are a phenomenal group of men and women who really get the idea of the sport—the style, tactics, and play," says O'Laughlin, who invites the Johnnies several times a year to play at his home croquet court. "It's been a wonderful thing to be involved with them."



Freshmen Have Spirit, Too!

A newcomer to the team, Stephanie Hurn (A17) (left) from Darien, Connecticut, made the spirit-spot video for this year's croquet match. "It was a really great collaboration and a lot of fun to make," says Hurn. "We were a bit nervous because we were doing it a week before croquet, but we pulled it together." Visit: www.youtube.com/watch?v=QlcVVQKiBc8



Mallet Man

Gary Dunkelberger, laboratory technician in Annapolis and this year's Prime Mover (who has the honor of opening the game with the first shot), handcrafts the St. John's team's mallets. "I built nine mallets last year and eight this year," says Dunkelberger. "I give the students their choice of woods, weights, and sizes, although all of the handles are made of one wood (ash) and of a standard pattern. A couple of players provided wood from home, of familial/sentimental nature. Those who purchase them treat them as souvenirs of their St. John's experience, as much as sporting implements."

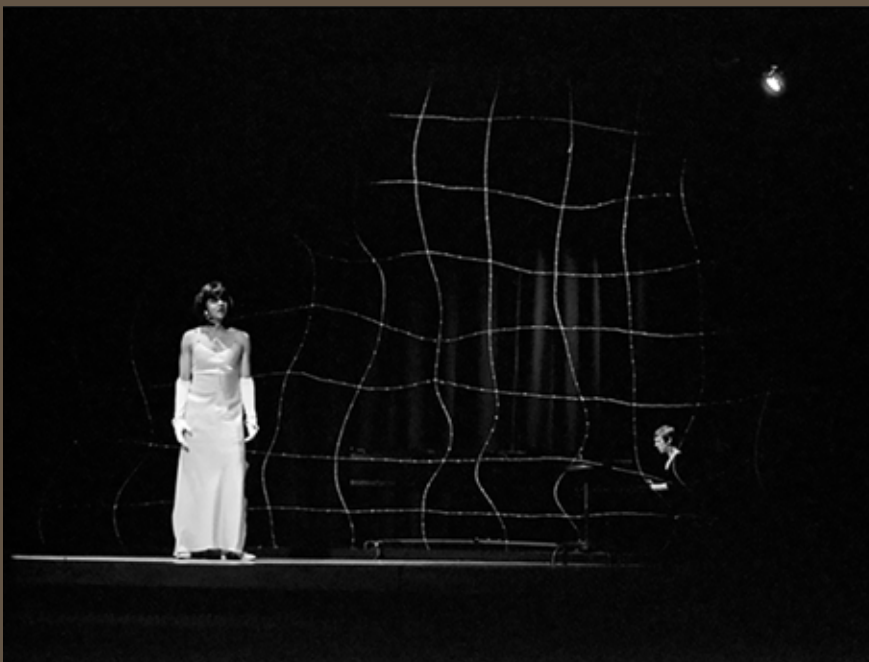


Simian Souls

What are Annapolis tutors Peter Kalkavage, Eva Brann (H89), and Eric Salem (A77) telling us? “The occasion was the publication of our very first Plato translation, the *Sophist*, in 1996 by Focus [Philosophical Library],” says Kalkavage. “We were supposed to do a ‘straight’ photo op by the [original] Liberty Tree, but decided to ham it up instead. There are three pictures, with each of us taking turns being one of the monkeys. Several years ago, I had them framed for us.”

The trio of tutors collaborated on translations of two of Plato’s other masterpieces, each of which was published by Focus Philosophical Library. In 2003, Brann, Kalkavage, and Salem translated *Phaedo*, the great dialogue of Socrates talking about death, dying, and the soul due to his impending execution. In 2012, they translated Plato’s *Statesman*, including an introduction, glossary of key terms, and essay. ☞

"I never had a plan to be a photographer. I am just an amateur. My punk friend in middle school was into filming skateboarding and encouraged me to get a film camera because they were better cameras for less money. I liked the feel of film and stuck with it. I learned from the books of Ansel Adams. I have photography to thank for nourishing my love of science and laboratories. I developed a deep connection with the darkroom at the college and actually cried pretty hard when I left it. I think its presence in my life is evident in my work—the strange loneliness I felt while reading those difficult books, and the real struggle to seek after things beautiful.... I am a photographer rather than a painter or a sculptor because I love light and chemistry.... Photographers are, at least in some way, operators of machinery. I think photographers push the boundaries of tools just like other artists. For a photographer like me, luck is a big part of the task: you cannot plan to stumble upon something odd or intriguing. Since reading *War and Peace* and some of the senior laboratory readings, I have come to appreciate things that are beyond my own control."



PHOTOS: From *Etude for Freedom* by Adam Maraschky (A13). He developed them in the college darkroom, then self-published the digital scans as a book. To raise funds, Maraschky "jumped on the Kickstarter bandwagon" and is "grateful to all those who donated to or encouraged the project and hope they find joy in the images." In the Annapolis Admissions office, there is a copy of the book inscribed by Maraschky: "To the prospective students of St. John's, may this book excite your imaginations about the College."

www.maraschkyphoto.com/st-johns-college.html

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