A capital campaign is about more than money, says Dean Rebecca Bushnell. It’s about making connections — to alumni and friends, to a vision of the future for the School of Arts and Sciences. “Strengthening faculty, guaranteeing access to the finest students and bringing state-of-the-art facilities online are connected initiatives that will raise the School to new levels of eminence.”
Special Campaign Section

4 Making History in the Arts and Sciences

Features

12 From Bedside to Battlefield
Bioethicist Probes the Art and Science of Healing and War
by Peter Nichols

16 True Grit
Young Scholar Parses How Perseverance and Passion Make for Long-Term Success
by Priya Ratneshwar

18 Faculty Essay The Constitutional Goals of Today’s Christian Conservatives
by Rogers M. Smith

22 Scholar on the Street
Alexine Fleck Connects Scholarship and Activism
by Mark Wolverton

24 A Nation Underfoot
Professor Unearths the Stories Ignored by History
by Melissa Field

Briefs

15 Virtual Activism
Grad Student Asks, Can Online Dissent Change Real-World Politics?

27 21st-Century Huck Finn
Pursuing Present-Tense Literary Adventure on the Mississippi

Departments

3 Dean’s Column
Connections

8 SAS Journal — Campus News
Sunny Future for Sustainable Energy
It's a Bioscience World
Stats on a Healthier Nation
Rhodes Passion
Gender in Harm’s Way

10 SAS Frontiers — Faculty Research
Faust in Copenhagen
Godly Republic
Hearing the Lost Music
Carbon Nanotube Aerogels
Monkey Mind

28 With Class — Teaching & Learning
Filming the Middle East
History Through the Lives of Those Who Live It

30 SAS Partnerships — Advancing Our Mission
An Ideal Partnership
Friendly Competitors
Partners in Leadership
The Society of Arts and Sciences

34 Last Word
Cook Strait
by Scott Coleman

35 Last Look
The Doctor Is Down
Y es, a capital campaign is about raising money, but money is never the only goal of fundraising. For the School of Arts and Sciences, a campaign is a wonderful opportunity to connect with all our friends. It’s a chance to go out and tell them about the vision our deans, our faculty and our students have for the future. It’s a way to spread the good news about the great things — the innovative teaching, the pioneering scholarship and the vigorous service projects — underway now at Penn.

We have more than 113,000 living alumni. Add to that Penn parents and other lovers of the liberal arts, and we can enlist an army of supporters involved in spreading the word and making the vision real. A campaign is the moment to connect with them all.

Unlike the high grade that marks academic achievement with an A, the success of our campaign will be measured by advancing what we call the three F’s: faculty, facilities and financial aid.

Endowed chairs carry great prestige in the academy and are given to recognize and reward faculty excellence. They allow us to recruit and retain the world’s top teachers and scholars, and to nurture rising academicians. Endowment for financial aid keeps the door to a world-class education open for the very best students, and funding for academic programs helps us to offer an experience that matches their abilities and ambitions. New buildings and renovated campus structures are far more than bricks and mortar: they make the School’s chief enterprise of research and teaching possible.

Each of these priorities is a critical part of what it means to be a great school of arts and sciences. Strengthening faculty, guaranteeing access to the finest students and bringing state-of-the-art facilities online are connected initiatives that will raise the School to new levels of eminence. There are, of course, many programs and needs, and we are eager to engage with anyone who wishes to follow their passion for the liberal arts.

Forthcoming issues of Penn Arts & Sciences Magazine will feature stories that highlight School priorities and the exciting work our faculty and students are doing, all of which our campaign supports. The profile of Jonathan Moreno (p.12) in this issue looks at his scholarship in the fields of bio- and neuroethics, and the valuable insights it offers to government officials, health professionals and ordinary citizens. The inclusion of an essay by political science professor Rogers Smith (p.18) calls attention to the School’s commitment to investigating critical issues in constitutionalism and democracy, an important initiative outlined in our strategic plan.

Enhancing the foundations of excellence in the School will have effects far beyond our doors. In every great research university, the arts and sciences are at the very heart of the institution’s mission and intellectual vitality. Thus, an investment in the School of Arts and Sciences is an investment in the University of Pennsylvania. Indeed, it is an investment in the development and dissemination of revolutionary ideas, resourceful leadership and new knowledge across our global society.

Our friends from all around the world are the fourth F, and they are as important to our success as the other three. As our campaign picks up, I’ll need to pack my suitcase a lot, but that’s OK: I have a great story to tell. When I’m on the road, I talk with lots of alumni who are proud of their Penn education. Many have not been back to campus for 20 or 30 years. When I tell them of all we have achieved since they were students, they are even more proud of what it means to be a Penn Arts and Sciences graduate. It was exciting to be connected then, I tell them, and it’s exciting to be connected now.

Connections

BY DEAN REBECCA W. BUSHNELL

DEAN’S COLUMN

As our campaign picks up, I’ll need to pack my suitcase a lot, but that’s OK: I have a great story to tell.
Every great research university must be anchored by a strong arts and sciences core.

At the University of Pennsylvania, the School of Arts and Sciences is the nexus for the integration of knowledge across disciplines, engagement with communities, locally and globally, and innovation in education that make Penn one of the leading universities in the nation’s history. Penn’s potential is inextricably tied to the continued strength of its intellectual backbone, the School of Arts and Sciences.

The Making History in the Arts and Sciences campaign is an integral part of the University’s $3.5 billion campaign. The School’s fundraising goal of $500 million is an aggressive one. The financial goals of the SAS campaign support the programmatic initiatives outlined in the School’s strategic plan:

- Increasing resources to recruit and retain the best faculty
- Enhancing support for graduate and undergraduate students
- Expanding our funds for innovation in undergraduate education
- Raising the support necessary to make much-needed improvements to the School’s spaces for research and learning.

OPENING DOORS TO OPPORTUNITY: FINANCIAL AID
Our Goal: $170 Million

Education transforms students’ lives. By making the promise of a world-class education a reality for the most talented students, regardless of social and economic background, scholarships and fellowships at Penn open doors to a brighter future for thousands every year. And by providing a path for the best minds to access the best possible education, financial aid reaches beyond individual students to benefit our diverse society.

Penn has long maintained a policy of need-blind admissions. Now this commitment is strengthened by a policy of paying tuition, and room and board for all undergraduates from families with incomes of less than $60,000. The scope of this commitment, while great, is critical to the future of need-blind admissions and to guaranteeing our ability to sustain a talented, diverse student body.

Since the majority of Penn undergraduates are students of the College of Arts and Sciences, increasing the School’s scholarship endowment is imperative. Providing more generous financial aid will ensure that SAS remains competitive with other leading colleges and universities and attracts outstanding undergraduates from diverse backgrounds.

Our commitment to graduate students is equally strong. Graduate students are a vital link in the intellectual life of a university. They are students, but also teachers, mentors, advisors, scholars, collaborators. They come here to be nurtured and inspired by our outstanding faculty, but at the same time they energize the institution through their creativity and dedication to acquiring and advancing knowledge. They represent the future of scholarship, and those who go on to academic careers establish Penn’s quality among our peers. In short, no research university can thrive without a vibrant graduate-student culture.

In keeping with their importance to our intellectual vitality, the School is committed to securing the resources necessary to recruit the very best graduate students. This financial assistance includes not only fellowship support, but support for summer stipends and dissertation research. Penn has long lagged behind its peer institutions in its ability to provide competitive support packages. While we have enjoyed some gains recently, we have a long way to go to ensure that we remain an institution of choice for the top graduate students.

THE FOUNDATION FOR EXCELLENCE: FACULTY
Our Goal: $195 Million

The vitality of the arts and sciences at Penn lies in the strength of its faculty. SAS recruits professors who are at the forefront of their disciplines yet can move nimbly across disciplinary boundaries to address emerging questions and ideas. They are known for their dedication to teaching and mentoring both undergraduate and graduate students. They consistently
demonstrate their willingness to work together to better the University, and they are actively engaged in applying their knowledge for the benefit of society.

The School’s long-term success depends on its continued ability to recruit, retain and develop the finest faculty. Endowed professorships have proven to be the most effective tool to build and sustain our faculty. A named appointment carries great prestige and gives the School a meaningful way to recognize and reward excellence in scholarship and teaching. Endowed chairs also provide a permanent source of research funding and salary support that allows the School to direct operating funds to other needs.

For these reasons, establishing endowed professorships is one of SAS’s top priorities. Recruiting, retaining and expanding an eminent faculty will require endowing 45 new professorships. In addition, we must secure term and endowed funds to support recruitment of rising scholars at the junior ranks.

THE FUTURE OF UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION: FUNDING INNOVATION IN THE COLLEGE

Our Goal: $50 Million

The College of Arts and Sciences embraces the responsibility of providing an education that matches the talents of its outstanding students, as reflected in our long history of innovation. This spirit of leadership in education is demonstrated in initiatives like the College’s freshman seminar program — a program now replicated by many other institutions — which ensures that all first-year students enjoy intellectual interaction with faculty in small-class settings.

The College is a pioneer in seeking new ways of integrating theory and practice. Our summer research program provides paid internships to undergraduate students who serve as apprentices at cultural, historical and educational organizations like the Institute for Contemporary Art and the National Constitution Center. The Fels Public Policy Internship Program helps College students connect their academic experience at Penn with real-world experiences in settings that include the Department of Homeland Security, the Treasury Department and the Council on Foreign Relations, to name just a few.

Interdisciplinary programs, another Penn hallmark, are constantly evolving in the College. Well-established interdisciplinary majors like the biological basis of behavior and philosophy, politics and economics have been joined by the new Vagelos Program in Life Sciences and Management. This joint venture with the Wharton School combines scientific and entrepreneurial classroom, research and practical experience to prepare students for success in the world of biotechnology.

To help students forge the path from their academic to their professional careers, the College has launched an alumni mentoring program. This initiative gives students access to a valuable resource — the network of Penn alumni — so that they can receive advice about intended career tracks and academic choices.

In order to enhance our capacity to offer these and other innovative programs that are responsive to the needs of students in a new century, the School is seeking to raise support for undergraduate initiatives. These funds will allow us to strengthen existing programs and develop new ones that will enrich education at Penn and serve as models for other universities and colleges.

BUILDING THE HOME FOR ACCOMPLISHMENT: FACILITIES PROJECTS

Our Goal: $85 Million

Our outstanding faculty produce research that changes the way we see the world. As dedicated teachers, they open up new horizons in the minds of students. Our talented students transform the knowledge and experiences that they acquire here into ideas and action that have impact far beyond Penn. None of these things can happen without buildings — the physical spaces that house discovery, learning and academic interaction.

SAS has targeted three priority facilities needs. Two of these projects will help to advance our work along the most exciting lines of scientific discovery being
I would like to be a part of the campaign in my own small way," wrote Peter Dutz Manda, G’89, just hours after President Gutmann sent an e-mail to alumni, faculty, staff, students, parents and friends, inviting everyone to celebrate Penn and join the "journey" to eminence. "It is time to be making history," she wrote. "Let’s do it together." Manda responded with the first gift to the School of Arts and Sciences. "The president’s message was just very strong and the goal is very clear," he explains.

Manda is a graduate student in the Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy at Rutgers University. He returned to school after more than a decade as a contract attorney, a career that took him to Japan, Brazil, Austria, Canada, Spain, Australia and Singapore. "With the Penn alumni I have met around the world," he says, "I have always had a sense of family." He was a member of the Tokyo Penn Club, and his interest in literature has led him to take part in online book-discussion groups sponsored by the Kelly Writers House.

As a grad student in Asian and Middle Eastern studies at Penn, he concentrated on classical Persian literature. "Professors Hanaway, Spooner and Allen had a profound influence on my thinking about literature and the interrelationship of literature with other disciplines," he recalls. "It was an excellent education that provided me with tools I have used while wearing all kinds of professional hats.”

Giving to Penn is a “no-brainer,” Manda says. “If I can help increase the University’s resources, however incrementally, then I have done something for a student or professor down the line. I would encourage all alumni to think about what they gained from being at Penn and give to the campaign. Without a strong endowment and a good capital fund, Penn wouldn’t be the university it is.”

The Neural and Behavioral Sciences Building
A revolution is occurring in brain science as research connects the basic building blocks of biology with complex behavior and phenomena, including human consciousness. Our new neural and behavioral sciences building will put Penn in the forefront of that revolution. As the headquarters for the School’s genes to brains to behavior initiative, it will house biology and psychology faculty, the undergraduate biological basis of behavior program (one of the School’s most popular majors) and the Penn Genomics Institute. The health and engineering schools will also contribute to collaborative, creative research and education in the building’s labs and classrooms.

The Krishna P. Singh Center for Nanotechnology
This building, a joint project with the School of Engineering and Applied Science, will put Penn in the vanguard of another cutting-edge area of science: the manipulation of single molecules to create new materials and devices that operate on a minuscule scale. Advances in nanoscience will produce new technology in the biomedical arena as well as in fields such as computing and electronics. In addition to enhancing research and education at Penn, the building will advance the regional economy by encouraging technology transfer and entrepreneurial startups.

The Home of the Music Department
SAS is planning a renovation and expansion of its music building to restore this historic landmark to its original splendor and provide a fitting home for the School’s top-ranked music department. The restored building will promote the culture of music on campus, providing well-equipped classrooms, rehearsal spaces and practice rooms for the hundreds of students from across the University who take courses in the department or participate in performance groups each year. By incorporating sustainable design and construction features, the building will have the added distinction of serving as a model for environmental responsibility on campus.
On October 20, the University of Pennsylvania publicly launched Making History: The Campaign for Penn — the largest comprehensive campaign in its 258-year history. The goal is to raise $3.5 billion over five years in support of students, faculty, facilities and programs. Penn’s School of Arts and Sciences has its own ambitious goal: $500 million for priorities aligned with the School’s strategic plan.

With an endowment of over $6.5 billion, it is inevitable that people ask whether Penn really needs a campaign of this size. And with a goal that large, many will ask if their modest contributions will even be noticed. Personally, I love to hear questions like this because I have terrific, myth-busting answers.

**MYTH #1. PENN DOESN’T NEED MY MONEY.**
Not true! While the University’s endowment ranks 11th in the nation, when you consider spendable income per student — a more meaningful comparison — it ranks 65th, a stark competitive disadvantage. The story is even more compelling when you look at resources available within the School of Arts and Sciences. Over 60 percent of all Penn students are enrolled in the School’s undergraduate and graduate programs, but its endowment of just over $658 million provides only $2,930 per student each year. Penn’s competitive *U.S. News & World Report* ranking — No. five — despite its non-competitive endowment, proves that we can stretch a dollar for maximum impact. And Penn’s 20.2 percent endowment return last year shows that we know how to put your money to work. Our ability to do more with less makes Penn a great investment.

**MYTH #2. MY SMALL GIFT WON’T MAKE A DIFFERENCE.**
Not true! Almost every day we read about multi-million-dollar gifts that transform an institution. Gifts like that of Bob Fox, C’52 (profiled on p.31) enabled the School to recruit John DiIulio, C’80, G’80, in 1999 and to start the Fox Leadership Program. With his recent gift, Bob has guaranteed that the Fox Leadership Program will be here forever to help undergraduates develop as leaders.

These transformational moments are, without a doubt, important and valuable. But we shouldn’t discount the evolutionary change that has sustained — even transformed — Penn Arts and Sciences since its inception. No matter the size of one’s gift, everyone can play a vital role in the School’s advancement, especially when we consider the combined impact of all gifts. Peter Dutz Manda, G’89 (see sidebar, p.6) understands this, which is why, in response to President Amy Gutmann’s e-mail announcement about the launch of the campaign, he pledged $250 to the School’s campaign. “It’s so minimal,” he apologized, “but it’s the best I can do.” Peter is a graduate student with a family. He’s also a money-myth buster. “I know that the incremental counts,” he said.

The incremental also adds up. Since the campaign’s silent phase began, we have received nearly $1.5 million in gifts of $5,000 or less. Put another way, this amount is equivalent to the spendable income from an $18.5 million endowment. And if alumni who majored in biology, psychology or the biological basis of behavior over the last 10 years each gave $1,000 a year — less than $3 a day — during the campaign, we would raise $18.7 million. That’s 75 percent of our fundraising goal for the proposed neural and behavioral sciences building that will house these programs (see p.7).

That’s a lot of smaller gifts making a very big difference. ■
Sunny Future for Sustainable Energy
Penn researchers are at the forefront of discovering solutions to one of society’s most pressing concerns — finding renewable sources of energy. The Department of Energy recently awarded professor of chemistry Andrew Rappe and his team a $710,000 grant to improve the harvesting, conversion and use of solar energy. Rappe’s research focuses on designing new semi-conducting ferroelectric materials that use sunlight to convert water to hydrogen and oxygen. Rappe and his team are designing these materials to harness more of the light spectrum, thereby making energy conversion more efficient. “Our research is dedicated to making solar energy viable and more affordable,” he says. Rappe is a member of the Energy Research Group at Penn. The group comprises Penn researchers from disciplines across the University who are working on projects designed to make energy use more sustainable and environmentally sound. “The Energy Research Group is finding multiple ways to address our nation’s and world’s energy needs,” Rappe says. “The time is right for solar energy research at Penn.”

It’s a Bioscience World
Last summer, five students from the Roy and Diana Vagelos Program in Life Sciences and Management (LSM) traveled to the other side of the globe to receive a hands-on education about how scientific endeavors play out in the marketplace. Sophomores Christine Anterasian, Pia Banerjee, Jason Han, Gan Hong Tan and Sherry Yin attended month-long internships at Nicholas Piramal India Limited, one of India’s largest pharmaceutical companies. From working in the company’s research and development division to reviewing job appraisals, the interns gained an international outlook on how a bioscience company is managed. They also had a chance to participate in cultural activities. The group was invited to a corporate event in honor of the Hindu god Krishna at company headquarters and to celebrate the Indian holiday Rakhi at the home of Swati Piramal, director of strategic alliances and communications at the company. Piramal, who also serves on the LSM advisory board, initiated this internship opportunity. Andrew Coopersmith, director of administration and advising for the program, says the cross-cultural nature of the internship taught students to think of themselves as citizens of the world who have the potential to make a worldwide impact on health-care issues. “India is a country generating major scientific growth, and for our students to experience that firsthand is just marvelous,” Coopersmith says. “It’s important they see that what they’re learning in the classroom has global applications.”

Stats on a Healthier Nation
Irma Elo knows that numbers often speak as loudly as words on the state of the nation’s health. An associate professor of sociology and associate director for training and information services at Penn’s Population Studies Center, Elo regularly uses vital and health statistics in her research on how societal inequalities affect health. Many of these numbers are generated by the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS), the nation’s principal health statistics agency. Now, as the recently appointed chair of the Board of Scientific Counselors for NCHS, Elo can help the agency do its important work even better.

NCHS data help policy-makers and scholars as well as private and non-profit sectors of the U.S. economy to monitor the country’s health, guide health policy and set policy priorities. As chair of NCHS’s primary scientific advisory board, Elo will draw on her sociology and demography research experience to help advise and conduct reviews of the center’s statistical and epidemiological research. Elo says, “I hope the board will be in a position to provide constructive advice to NCHS regarding how to make the most efficient use of its resources and how best to take advantage of new opportunities to monitor and evaluate key public health issues and health policy.”
Rhodes Passion
When Rhodes Scholarship winner Joyce Meng, C'08, met some of the other award candidates for the first time, she was impressed by the clarity with which they were pursuing their passions. “To be selected from this pool of students was absolutely amazing,” says Meng, who was one of only 32 students across the nation to receive the scholarship this year. Meng, a senior in the Huntsman Program in International Studies and Business, possesses an impressive amount of clarity and passion herself. She will use the scholarship to pursue master’s degrees in economic development and financial economics at the University of Oxford. The new Rhodes Scholar hopes these studies will help parlay her dream of fostering sustainable growth in developing countries into a career in development policy. Meng has already made considerable advances toward this goal, including co-founding YouthBank, an innovative bank and business incubator for street youth in Lagos, Nigeria. She looks forward to a future that will challenge her to find new and better solutions for those in need around the world. “The Rhodes Scholarship isn’t an end in itself,” Meng says. “It’s a means that will open up a lot more doors to something I’m so passionate about.”

Gender in Harm’s Way
When Shannon Lundeen, associate director of Penn’s Alice Paul Center for Research on Women, Gender and Sexuality, taught a class called Gender and Warfare a few semesters ago, she realized that many of her students’ ideas of conflict were limited to U.S. involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan. Lundeen recognized a need to bring in more scholars who could discuss not only conflicts outside of U.S. engagements but also how these conflicts relate to ideologies of gender. In response, the Alice Paul Center and the Women’s Studies Program, along with 11 other schools and centers across the University, sponsored last fall’s Gender, War and Militarism Conference. “The conference generated discussion on the ways in which conflicts are mobilized by cultural ideologies of gender and sexuality, and the ways in which they affect norms of gender and sexuality in particular cultures,” Lundeen explains.

In accordance with the interdisciplinary nature of research on women, gender and sexuality, conference speakers and panelists included scholars from a variety of disciplines and institutions as well as activists and other professionals. Their presentations ranged in topic from military couples and domestic violence to postwar trajectories for girls associated with fighting forces in Sierra Leone. “We received feedback from presenters who were extremely happy we brought them together with people outside of their disciplines,” Lundeen says. “They really came to be with one another because they don’t necessarily get that opportunity in their particular disciplines or fields of work.”
Faust in Copenhagen

“If you’re going to write a non-fiction book,” advised physics professor Gino Segrè in his 60 Second Lecture last fall, “you’d better choose a story you’re interested in with characters that you want to know better because you’re probably going to be spending a lot of time with them.” In writing his newest book, Faust in Copenhagen: A Struggle for the Soul of Physics, Segrè spent three years communing with the spirits of the most brilliant stars of 20th-century physics — Niels Bohr, Paul Dirac, Werner Heisenberg, Wolfgang Pauli and other luminaries. “I wanted to write it because the characters are in many ways my intellectual heroes,” he says. Segrè is a high-energy theoretical physicist. His book is an account of the conversations and personalities at the April 1932 physics conference held at Bohr’s Copenhagen Institute. It was the dawn of nuclear power and big science, and world war was about to seize upon the direction of these scientists’ research and lives. The conference ended with a skit, a spoof of Goethe’s Faust written by physicist Max Delbrück that poked fun at the elder pantheon of physicists. Segrè’s book is a mix of science and history that gives general readers a close-up glimpse of the culture of theoretical physics and portraits of some of the most remarkable, witty and idiosyncratic people you’ll ever spend time with. You can view 60 Second Lectures at www.sas.upenn.edu/video.

Godly Republic

Even before his brief stint as “faith czar” in the White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives, John Dilulio, C’80, G’80, was a believer in the power of religion-government partnerships to help solve the nation’s social problems. He still is, although as a political scientist, his “faith” is data-based. His new book, Godly Republic: A Centrist Blueprint for America’s Faith-Based Future, argues for the middle ground between those who seek to cast out religion, like a demon, from public life and those intent on baptizing America as a Christian nation. Dilulio, the Frederic Fox Leadership Professor of Politics, Religion and Civil Society, observes that “most citizens in both parties, and most top leaders, agree that, so long as there is no proselytizing or such, government can and should partner with urban community-serving religious organizations and grassroots groups to serve needy children, youth, and families.” He hopes the book will help pull the church-state debate back to the political center “on behalf of the poor.” He writes, “I even hold out hope for mutual civic forbearance so deep that it will permit joint left-right, secular-sectarian advocacy and action.” Given the deeply held convictions animating the culture wars, it seems an unlikely hope. But, Dilulio adds, “I believe in miracles.”

Hearing the Lost Music

Music professor Gary Tomlinson loves to “listen” to the forgotten songs of indigenous Americans, songs whose actual sound can no longer be reconstructed or performed. “What we can still hear in certain songs from these societies … is the nuanced cultural work they were designed to accomplish,” he writes in The Singing of the New World: Indigenous Voice in the Era of European Conflict. Tomlinson, the Annenberg Professor in the Humanities, is an expert in the music of the late Renaissance and early Baroque period and also specializes in opera, music and cross-cultural contact, and cultural history and historiography. Using accounts from early European colonizers, archaeological findings and rare indigenous documents, he explores
the power of song in Aztec rituals from just after the European conquest, in Inca ceremony and in cannibal rituals of the Brazilian Tupinamba. “I’m interested in two very general propositions,” he explains: “musical difference in the world — that is, the extraordinary, deep variety that this universal human activity assumes — and, behind and beyond this difference, the overarching similarities that characterize the powers humans discover in music making.” His book closes with an examination of these case studies as “instances of the always fraught role of heightened voice in the meetings of far-flung societies.”

Tomlinson’s future research will look at the evolution of music making in *Homo sapiens* and our hominid ancestors.

**Carbon Nanotube Aerogels**

Scientists from the Department of Physics and Astronomy have created aerogels made from carbon nanotubes that can support 8,000 times their weight. Aerogels are rigid gels from which the liquid is extracted and replaced by a gas. A carbon nanotube is a one-atom thick sheet of graphite rolled into a cylinder one nanometer — a billionth of a meter — across. In a collaboration led by Arjun Yodh, the James M. Skinner Professor of Science, and Jay Kikkawa, an associate professor of physics, researchers created aerogels interlaced with carbon nanotubes. “We started with carbon nanotube gel networks in suspension,” Yodh explains, “removed the suspending fluid and thereby produced a network of carbon nanotubes with controllable purity, connectivity, strength, conductivity and shape.” The scientists freeze-dried the liquid suspension, leaving a web of freestanding nanotube filaments. This new class of material has a high surface-to-volume ratio and is ultra-light and potentially extra strong for its weight. Investigators are able to manipulate its electrical conductivity, flexibility and strength by adding polymers to the starting suspensions and by electrically pulsing the aerogel network. “I think sensors and electrodes might be the most easily attainable applications,” notes Yodh. The new carbon nanotube aerogels might also contribute to the manufacture of stronger, lighter materials, he says.

**Monkey Mind**

“Monkey society is governed by the same two general rules that governed the behavior of women in so many 19th-century novels,” write Dorothy Cheney and Robert Seyfarth in their book *Baboon Metaphysics: The Evolution of a Social Mind*. “Stay loyal to your relatives … but also try to ingratiate yourself with the members of high-ranking families.” Cheney, a professor of biology, and Seyfarth, a psychology professor, show baboons to be skilled social schemers. For 15 years, the husband-and-wife team has lugged loudspeakers, batteries and cameras across the Okavango Delta in Botswana, avoiding lions, devising field experiments and watching a troupe of 80 Chacma baboons. These sharp-fanged, dog-nosed creatures maintain strict matrilineal hierarchies in which, the researchers discovered, individuals recognize their own place as well as the rank of other group members. Many of Cheney’s and Seyfarth’s imaginative experiments involved playback of baboon calls whose meaning ran counter to the animals’ expectations of what “should” happen, given the reigning system of rank. The scientists then observed registers of surprise, which suggest that the baboons understand who stands where within the troupe. Their findings tell us a great deal about the social intelligence of these primates and even something about how the human mind — and language — could have evolved out of our ancestors’ facility at comprehending the rule-governed structure of their own social groups.
Jonathan Moreno is many things: a philosopher, a teacher, an ethicist, an historian, a television-news bioethics authority, an advisor to presidents and legislators. The David and Lyn Silfen University Professor, Moreno holds joint appointments in the School of Arts and Sciences (history and sociology of science) and the School of Medicine (medical ethics). He knows something about law, politics, medicine, economics, sociology and history, and as one of the University's five Penn Integrates Knowledge professors, he epitomizes the connections across disciplines, professions and realms of engagement that the PIK chairs stand for.

Before coming to Penn, Moreno "did ethics" in clinical settings for more than a decade, advising medical practitioners and families at Children's Hospital in Washington, SUNY Health Science Center at Brooklyn and the University of Virginia. To some, his expertise as a "hospital philosopher" helped illuminate a way through the thicket of agonizing decisions and conundrums posed by modern medicine and scientific progress. To others, his tendency to alight momentarily on some answer only to move on to yet another question — clarifying the answer or going deeper — makes him as welcome as a pesky mosquito.

"Socrates referred to himself as a gadfly because in the marketplace he was an annoyance," Moreno observes. The ancient Greek philosopher had a way of buzzing around the well-dressed, well-spoken authorities of Athens with bothersome questions about popular opinions and unexamined assumptions. "The public philosophers were always to be gadflies," Moreno explains.

"Neuroscientists — scientists in general — don’t appreciate that they’re part of the aggregation of knowledge and that government people whose job it is to protect us are looking at it all the time."
There’s a certain amount of speaking truth to power that’s supposed to take place when you’re doing it right. You’re supposed to challenge and be an annoyance.”

Moreno was trained as a philosopher — his Ph.D. dissertation explored the tradition of American pragmatism. His first close encounter with bioethics happened in the late 1970s, when he was a brand-new assistant professor. “A call went out for a faculty member who would participate in a new, experimental course in bioethics,” he recalls. “Being an untenured, junior professor, you say yes.” Teamed with a young physician who tutored him in medical issues, Moreno stayed one step ahead of his students in the ethics readings. The character of bioethics as an applied philosophical endeavor was congenial to his pragmatic leanings and the thinking of intellectual heroes like John Dewey, William James and Charles Peirce. “I got intellectually hooked,” he says. “But I also wanted to have a bigger reach than academia, and bioethics was a way of being out there and putting your ideas to work — testing them in the crucible of experience.”

As a bioethicist at the bedside or in the conference room, Moreno has seen the hard choices that sometimes must be made with uncertain data that belie the finality of the decision. It makes for a workday that can be as troubling as it is challenging. “No one is trained for this,” he once murmured to himself on a hospital ward after watching a mother hold her infant for what was likely the last time.

What philosophers are trained for — and this equips them to be bioethicists — is the free play of ideas and the formulation and assessment of arguments. As outsiders in the medical field, they can also pose naïve questions that can startle practitioners and policymakers into reconsidering assumptions. “If you’re the bioethicist in a clinical case,” Moreno comments, “and you don’t say something that causes somebody to be taken aback, you’re not doing your job.”

Once he embarked on the journey of public philosopher, the horizon of issues opened out beyond the hospital walls. He probed ethical dimensions of genetic testing, human and embryonic stem-cell research, the conduct of clinical trials, conflicts of interest in medicine, informed consent of people with mental disorders and more. Congress invited him to testify on ethical matters, and he has served as senior staff member on two presidential commissions. His work for President Clinton’s Advisory Committee on Human Radiation Experiments, which examined the secret history of experiments on soldiers and citizens during the Cold War, led to his discovery that the military had been asking ethical questions about research on humans long before academia took them up. His study of government research for the purpose of building better soldiers and improving battlefield performance was published in Undue Risk: Secret State Experiments on Humans.

The CIA and the Pentagon, he learned, had turned an eye toward Timothy Leary’s LSD experiments in the ’60s as well as other laboratory work that scientists were starting to conduct on the human brain. Recent leaps in brain imaging, neuropharmacology and high-tech neuroscience have caught the attention of national defense agencies just as advances in atomic physics did in the 20th century. “Neuroscientists — scientists in general — don’t appreciate that they’re part of the aggregation of knowledge and that government people whose job it is to protect us are looking at it all the time,” Moreno says. In fact, defense and security agencies provide considerable funding for science, and he has heard story after story from neuroscientists recounting the unexpected calls they receive from the defense establishment. In his book Mind Wars: Brain Research and National Defense, he writes, “Many of the scientists didn’t know much about the larger context [of their funding], didn’t seem to have given it much thought, or figured it was an opportunity to fund their research that wouldn’t lead to anything questionable.” In his overview of the investment national security agencies are making in brain science, Moreno pokes some questions at the mix of science, ethics and national defense.

Historically, he says, development of military technologies has yielded benefits for civil society in addition to increased national security. When evaluating the “dual use” of breakthroughs in understanding and manipulating the brain, scales that weigh the good and the bad often give opposite readings in different contexts. Cutting-edge brain-scanning technology, for instance, could one day help commanders remotely monitor and manage information overload in combat pilots, making them more effective. Brain-imaging devices might also make for highly reliable neuro-lie detectors, which could not only be effective for interrogating terrorists but far more merciful than waterboarding. Even in health care, these technologies would permit hospital nurses to keep track of...
The main thing, he proposes, is that we keep the questions coming and the dialogue going.

In recent studies, scientists found that victims of trauma who were given the beta blocker propranolol, which inhibits the release of brain chemicals that consolidate long-term memories with emotion, suffered a lesser degree of post-traumatic stress disorder. Some speculate the drug could prevent or lessen the psychic scars of war on soldiers, if administered before going into battle. Preserving young men from lifelong depression, insomnia and painful flashbacks seems like a good thing, "but do we really want guilt-free soldiers?" Moreno asks. "Soldiers who could pop an anti-guilt pill might not accrue experiences that lead them to hesitate when faced with an enemy they have been trained to annihilate." And what about brain-machine interfaces that would allow combat technicians to wield robotic weapons far from harm's way? "A robot army could certainly save many lives," Moreno admits, "but it could also make a great power more willing to use it."

The arsenal of coming neuro-weapons and other mind-blowing fruits of neuroscience are in themselves neither good nor evil, Moreno argues, but they do require close scrutiny, open discussion of implications for civil liberties and far-sighted regulation and policy-making — much like the way organ transplantation spawned bioethical oversight in medicine. The life-and-death cases that medical ethicists weigh pose stark challenges to values our society upholds. "Though these tests cannot be avoided," he counsels, "neither should we ever be confident that we have settled them once and for all."

In the 21st century, it is no exaggeration to assert that only science can provide for commercial innovation, economic growth, military defense and the best possible array of intelligence options. In recent years, the respect for evidence and the spirit of open inquiry has been threatened for the sake of short-term political advantage. But the larger issue is the long-term national interest, which depends on the best evidence that only science can provide for commercial innovation, economic growth, military defense and the best possible array of intelligence options.

In the 21st century, it is no exaggeration to assert that only free and rigorous inquiry and not authoritarian dogma can provide the reliable information required for our physical survival. Perhaps most importantly, progress in science is essential for a continued sense of our national purpose as participants in an historic experiment in freedom and self-governance, as one people joined by a common future rather than a common past, a future we cherish for the sake of the generations of Americans to come.

"Mind Wars has stirred a fair amount of censure from readers who think Moreno is too critical of national security agencies and others who think he is too accepting of government’s militarization of neuroscience. "I think it’s fine,” he says, “I mean, for the role that I want to play of opening up the conversation.” It reminds him of the old days of being a hospital philosopher, the outsider who knew enough about medicine to raise the questions no one else thought to ask. “It’s knowing enough about the brain, knowing enough about the way the research establishment works, knowing enough about politics, knowing enough about the security establishment to raise pretty specific questions. It’s back to being the gadfly, right?”

SCIENCE PROGRESS

BY JONATHAN MORENO

Francis Bacon is often credited as the first to express the modern idea of progress in terms of advancing science and technology. This vision was to have a profound effect on later 17th century thinkers, including those who provided the intellectual justification for the American Revolution.

The ideas of science and progress are deeply held in America’s self-identity, pervasive in our notions of who we are, what we do and why we do it. The optimistic “can-do” spirit; the approval of bigness, boldness and adventure; the lure of the frontier and “the road,” are all associated with this sensibility. At our best, we hold these truths to be, if not self-evident, at least within our grasp.

Science progress, the growth of knowledge, is in effect an expansion of consciousness. Science may not be the only path to a greater grasp of reality, but it makes a unique contribution to enhanced understanding of the cosmos and our place within it. To distort the process of inquiry amounts to a narrowing of vision, a corruption of imagination and a threat to our freedom as beings endowed with intellect. In recent years, the respect for evidence and the spirit of open inquiry has been threatened for the sake of short-term political advantage. But the larger issue is the long-term national interest, which depends on the best evidence that only science can provide for commercial innovation, economic growth, military defense and the best possible array of intelligence options.

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Adapted from an editorial for the online magazine Science Progress, www.scienceprogress.org. Moreno is editor in chief.
When doctoral student David Faris went to Egypt two summers ago, he was amazed to see the nation’s turbulent reaction to the July 2006 war between Israel and Lebanon. He noticed that popular demonstrations were forcing the government to change its rhetoric on the war — a remarkable occurrence for a regime that imposed an ongoing state of emergency in 1981 and has long restricted public expressions of dissent.

Drawing on his experiences as a blogger and part-time journalist as well as conversations with activists, the student of political science found that blogs were a central organizing tool for coordinating the protests. Funded by a Foreign Language and Area Studies Fellowship for dissertation research from Penn’s Middle East Center, he returned last summer to explore the impact of the Internet on the government’s tight reign on political life in Egypt. “I’m trying to figure out if things happening online are migrating offline and affecting policy or putting pressure on the government to change its attitude about certain issues,” he explains. After extensive interviews with bloggers and Internet users, he posits that the Web has inherent properties that allow people “to undercut the shackles of traditional authority.”

The instant nature of Web communication also curtails the ability of authorities to contain the spread of ideas, opinions and information. In one incident Faris studied, Web activists raised public awareness about a mass sexual assault on women during Ramadan. The resulting national and international coverage forced a response from the Egyptian government. In another incident, a cell-phone video of police torture was transmitted through blogs and e-mail. The news led to protests that forced the government to arrest and jail two police officers.

Faris’ research is still underway, but it has already yielded two papers. Last October, at the Association of Internet Researchers’ annual conference, he presented one exploring the possibility that traditional modes of communication — print, film and television — favor the Egyptian government’s strategies against secular and Islamist opposition groups, while the Web favors those opposing the regime. This spring, the Institute for Politics, Democracy & the Internet will publish Faris’ other paper on how rumors (ultimately false) that Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak was dead had proliferated across the Web despite official propaganda denying them.

Faris cannot yet conclude whether or not Web activists are at the forefront of a social movement that could break government control of political discourse in Egypt, but his hypothesis speaks to his belief that modes of communication are an important and underrated force in politics. “I think the way people transmit information to each other is a neglected aspect of a lot of big historical changes in the world,” he says. “The big question is, will digital technology, like the printing press and the telegraph, change how we do politics forever?”

—PRIYA RATNESHWAR
Nature or nurture? Inspiration or perspiration? Most of us have wondered whether success is due more to the talents we’re born with or to the choices we make. Assistant professor of psychology Angela Duckworth’s, G’03, Gr’06, lifelong fascination with this question colored her work as a public school teacher and volunteer. She worked with bright children who performed well below their academic potential, and she worked with kids who demonstrated average intelligence but excelled in school.

Duckworth, who is also a member of the center, and Seligman began discussing the non-intellectual traits they identified in their personal observations of successful people. Duckworth extended this conversation to interviews with successful professionals in a variety of fields — investment banking, painting, journalism, academia, medicine and law. From these interviews, she determined there was one personal characteristic shared by most prominent leaders in every field: grit.

Duckworth is the lead author on a paper recently published in the Journal of Personality and Social Psychology that explores the definition of grit and its relationship to success. Defined in the paper as “perseverance and passion for long-term goals,” grit is differentiated from the closely related trait of self-discipline, on which Duckworth has also published. The latter involves the ability to resist temptation and stay focused on accomplishing tasks immediately at hand.

“Whereas disappointment or boredom signals to others that it is time to change trajectory and cut losses, the gritty individual stays the course.”

If you think about a kid going through high school, there are no extraordinary challenges, but there are lots of little ones — do your homework every night, remember your supplies, start planning your term paper, don’t watch too much TV,” Duckworth explains. “In my studies, self-discipline has proven to be an excellent predictor of academic achievement.”

Duckworth’s paper states, “Whereas disappointment or boredom signals to others that it is time to change trajectory and cut losses, the gritty individual stays the course.”

Through a series of studies that required participants to answer questionnaires, Duckworth developed a Grit Scale that ranked how gritty subjects were and correlated that rank with other characteristics and achievements. Subjects of some studies represented the general population, while others represented high-achieving populations, such as Penn undergraduates, freshman cadets at West Point and finalists in the 2005 Scripps National Spelling Bee. She found that grittier individuals attained higher levels of education and made fewer career changes than less gritty individuals of the same age. The study also determined that older individuals tend to be higher in grit than younger ones, which suggests that the trait might increase over a person’s life.

In the study on West Point cadets, Duckworth found that grit predicted first-year summer retention of cadets better than self-discipline or the overall measure of cadet quality used by the military academy’s admissions committee. Self-discipline, however, was a better predictor of academic performance among cadets who did stay through the first summer training. Duckworth also discovered that grittier competitors in the spelling bee outranked less gritty ones, in part because they accumulated more practice. Finally, the study...
Duckworth’s research on grit has several practical implications. It suggests that in school settings, educators should support children who demonstrate great commitment to a goal with as many resources as they offer those identified as “gifted” or “talented.” Parents and educators should also prepare children to anticipate failure and misfortune and to work with stamina.

“There’s literature that shows that in every field that has been studied, the world-class performers do not get there until thousands and thousands and thousands of hours of practice,” she says.

Duckworth feels that her own resume isn’t very gritty. Before she came to Penn, she dabbled in a number of successful but disparate ventures. She worked as a school teacher and as a management consultant, she founded a free summer-enrichment program for low-income children, and she helped create a non-profit Web site providing comparative school information. She also earned a master’s degree in neuroscience at Oxford on a prestigious Marshall Scholarship. But after the birth of her first child, Duckworth had what she calls an “existential crisis” in which she reconsidered the consequences of constantly changing careers. When she decided to enroll in the psychology doctoral program at Penn, she told her husband that she “would not look up for at least 10 years.” This change in life strategy partly informed her studies on grit.

“We live in a period of time where people are very comfortable with changing careers, and in some ways that’s a wonderful thing,” Duckworth adds. “But a danger of this newfound good fortune is that you switch around all the time, and you never become really good at anything.”

Despite claims that her professional past lacks grit, Duckworth’s ventures demonstrate “perseverance and passion” for finding practical solutions to problems. Her research is no different. In the long-term, she wants to study why grit and other non-intellectual traits related to success are stronger in some people than in others and how they can be acquired. She’s also planning to work with charter schools to implement programs that can increase grit and self-discipline in children.

“If you ask people what they would like to change about themselves, oftentimes they say, ‘I wish I were more self-disciplined, or I really wish I could really stick with things,’” Duckworth says. “If I could help figure out that puzzle, even a small piece of it, I think that would be a contribution.”

on Penn undergraduates showed that grittier subjects earned higher GPAs than their less gritty peers, despite having lower SAT scores.
THE CONSTITUTIONAL GOALS OF TODAY’S CHRISTIAN CONSERVATIVES
In the last three decades, conservative Christians have created many organizations to litigate religious issues.

The process started in 1975 with the Christian Legal Society’s Center for Law and Religious Freedom and accelerated in the 1980s with new groups including the Rutherford Institute, the American Center for Law and Justice, Liberty Counsel and the Alliance Defense Fund. These organizations have brought suit or filed amicus briefs in every Supreme Court decision dealing with religious liberties in the last 15 years, often on the winning side. Some have suggested that via such litigation, these “New Christian Right” forces are shaping public policies and moving America closer to official acceptance that it is a “Christian nation.”
The Supreme Court’s recent decision in *Morse v. Frederick* (2007) illustrates why hopes or fears that this litigation is producing radical change prove unfounded. *Alongside* the American Civil Liberties Union, all the organizations above filed briefs on behalf of Joseph Frederick, the high school senior who was suspended for holding up his “Bong hits 4 Jesus” banner at a televised parade. A closely divided court sustained his suspension, holding that Frederick’s message could be seen as advocacy of illegal drugs, contrary to the school’s educational mission. The justices agreed with one main point in the New Christian Right briefs — that students could not be suspended for speech that might seem “offensive” because that would unduly burden protected religious as well as political and artistic expression. Despite the pleas of both liberal free-speech and conservative religious advocates, the majority did not accept that speech freedoms extended far enough to encompass this sort of “Jesus” talk.

*Frederick* shows that conservative Christian litigation groups win on some points but do not win all they seek, even before a Supreme Court thickly populated with religious conservatives. Still more significantly, it dramatizes the sorts of litigation strategies these groups have concluded they must pursue, if they are to win on issues most crucial to the survival of their institutions. And it illustrates why those strategies are far from what many conservative believers want — for they involve alliances with non-Christian groups and demand only a legal status “equal” to such associations. To do so, litigants must abandon claims that the courts should recognize the United States as a “Christian nation.”

Many assume that this litigation strategy arose in response to Supreme Court rulings limiting school prayer and establishing abortion rights. But Religious Right leaders have stated that it was only when the Internal Revenue Service denied tax exemptions to religious bodies with practices contrary to public policies, notably racial discrimination, that they realized “we had to fight for our lives.” The catalyst was the 1976 IRS denial of tax exempt status to Bob Jones University, which forbade interracial dating. Most conservative Christian churches did not have such bans, but they had other restrictions regarding sexual conduct, the hiring of non-believers and kindred matters that they feared might result in the loss of tax-exempt status and eligibility for other forms of governmental assistance. The Reagan administration supported them, but Congress in the 1980s did not. So they turned to the courts.

They faced a problem. Supreme Court precedents on tax exemptions, notably *Walz v. Tax Commission* (1970), indicated that “churches as such” could not receive exemptions or other financial benefits from government. They could get them only as part of a “broad class” of non-profit corporations such as “hospitals, libraries, playgrounds” that had “beneficial and stabilizing influences in community life.” Christian litigants were most likely to succeed if they sought “equal treatment” with other “beneficial” organizations rather than claiming special treatment due to their religious character.

Virtually all of the new Christian litigation groups have since sought only “equal treatment” in “establishment clause” cases involving government funding of private group activities. Though they lost the Bob Jones case, they soon began to win major victories, such as *Rosenberger v. Rector of the University of Virginia* (1995), which required the university to fund an evangelical student newspaper on the same basis as other student publications, and *Zelman v. Simmons-Harris* (2001), which upheld the use of public vouchers to attend private parochial schools. Because these successes have been keys to the financial health of their core institutions and operations, conservative Christian litigant groups have only become more firmly attached to the “equal treatment” strategy.

Initially, some conservative Christian lawyers favored a different approach in cases involving claims on behalf of the “free exercise” of religion. Federal judge Michael McConnell, formerly a law professor and favorite attorney for Christian organizations, argued in a major 1990 *Harvard Law Review* essay that the First Amendment expressly conferred on religious adherents rights to express and pursue beliefs that members of other groups did not have. But Justice Antonin Scalia, perhaps today’s most conservative justice, wrote for a bare majority emphatically rejecting such
contentions. In *Department of Human Resources v. Smith* (1990), he ruled that Oregon could refuse unemployment benefits to former drug counselors who were discharged because, as members of the Native American Church, they consumed peyote in religious ceremonies. He also denied that any “individual’s religious beliefs” could ever “excuse him from compliance with an otherwise valid law.” Scalia’s view was criticized by four dissenters, by most of Congress and by many advocacy groups, both conservative and liberal, but it has effectively prevailed.

Most conservative Christian litigants avoid making claims for distinctive rights of religious “free exercise” and seek instead to claim that religious expression is part of the broad “freedom of expression” protected by the First Amendment. That is why they often find themselves joining the ACLU. Many do not relish paying lawyers to urge that gay and lesbian student organizations receive funding on the same basis as evangelical Christian ones or to argue that strippers have the same expressive freedoms as preachers. Litigation cast in terms of “equal treatment” for religious and secular groups and “free expression” of secular and religious beliefs also holds little promise of winning governmental embrace of their view that American law should express only Christian moral values. At the same time, these strategies are gaining victories that have checked the earlier trend toward greater secularization of public policies, institutions and practices. And because conservative Christian organizations have been the fastest-growing American religious communities, they are the chief beneficiaries of decisions upholding public funding for religious groups on the same basis as others.

Those who fear that government is doing more on behalf of conservative Christians do have some reason to worry. Yet there is so little prospect that judges will embrace a “Christian nation” view of the Constitution that Christian litigants rarely articulate this goal in court. Hence, there is also reason to believe that, in law if not fully in life, the United States remains committed to a pluralistic, democratic society with equal rights, and liberty and justice for all — Christians and non-Christians alike.

**Rogers M. Smith is the Christopher H. Browne Distinguished Professor of Political Science and chair of the Penn Program on Democracy, Citizenship and Constitutionalism.**

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SOME HAVE SUGGESTED THAT VIA SUCH LITIGATION, THESE “NEW CHRISTIAN RIGHT” FORCES ARE SHAPING PUBLIC POLICIES AND MOVING AMERICA CLOSER TO OFFICIAL ACCEPTANCE THAT IT IS A “CHRISTIAN NATION.”

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THE PENN ALUMNI ONLINE COMMUNITY
In some parts of Philadelphia, Alexine Fleck, GEd’95, Gr’07, is still known as the Condom Lady. To the stray cats she saves from the rough streets of West Philadelphia, she’s a rescuer. To her students at a suburban community college, she’s just Professor Fleck.

They’re all good descriptions, yet none fully captures the multifaceted essence of this newly minted Ph.D. But whichever side of Fleck you examine, you’ll find a striking combination of activist and scholar, someone with an abiding passion for being involved.

While working on her English doctorate at Penn, that passion led Fleck to the philosophy of harm reduction — a nonjudgmental approach to public health that concentrates on helping drug users and prostitutes whose lifestyles put them at risk. “That made sense to me,” says Fleck, “so I started volunteering for the local syringe exchange, which is Prevention Point Philadelphia.”

Prevention Point is an alternative to the all-or-nothing War on Drugs. Fleck joined volunteers working the neighborhoods of North Philadelphia, collecting used syringes in a medical sharps container and passing out sterile ones. The work aims to stem the spread of HIV and hepatitis from shared needles.

It was a personal mission for her. “I lost two very good friends in high school to things that really should and could have been prevented,” she says. “I looked back, and I think harm reduction would have been a really good thing to have for them. I also realized how easy it is to slip through the cracks when you don’t have all the advantages.”

It wasn’t long before her volunteer work intersected with academic life. An ethnographer collecting data on HIV-risk communities for Penn’s Center for Studies of Addiction hired Fleck to gather information on the street. Aside from exchanging syringes, Fleck and some colleagues started passing out condoms to street walkers and directing them to a nearby van, where they could get help by signing up for HIV-prevention studies.

Some people might be intimidated at the prospect of getting up close and personal with the denizens of Philadelphia’s underside, but not Fleck. Even when she walked into a drug bust...
“WHEN YOU STOP FEELING LIKE YOU HAVE TO FIGURE OUT WHAT YOUR STAND IS ON SOMETHING, IT’S VERY FREEING. I’M NOT JUDGING; I’M JUST TRYING TO SOLVE PROBLEMS.”

her first day on the streets and found herself surrounded by armed police. “So my first experience was actually seeing a gun pointed in my direction,” she laughs. Later, she saw an addict staggering through a vacant lot and vomiting as he searched for his next fix. It was a rude introduction to the realities of the drug culture, but Fleck adapted. “I never really felt afraid, and it was very rare that I even felt apprehensive.”

Which is not to say that she was unaware of being out of place. “An earnest and nosy white girl with glasses from the university” is how she describes herself. “People would look at us, and we’d say, ‘Hey, we’re the Condom Ladies. Do you guys want some condoms?’”

We made it very clear that anything in our bag they wanted, they could have. So there was no reason to take anything.”

The Condom Ladies were not only accepted but sometimes even protected by the locals. Fleck remembers, “One time a young guy wanted a particular condom, and he reached into my bag. The other guys on the block were like, ‘You leave! You do not do that to the Condom Lady.’ And they made him go stand on another street corner.”

Inevitably, Fleck found herself becoming attached to some of the regulars as she got to know them and the difficult truths of their lives. When funding for the ethnography project dried up, Fleck lost her job, but she still returned to the neighborhoods and kept passing out condoms and clean syringes.

Her doctoral dissertation, “The Low and the Lost: Ethics, Expertise, and Drug-Use Memoirs,” examines the voices of the dispossessed. The research looks at how “narratives of addiction” have been shaped from the cocaine scare of the 1880s to the present. It’s an unusual topic for an English degree, seemingly more suited to a social-science program, but the dissertation committee accepted the project on the first round. “I was like a kid, testing how far I could go,” she recalls.

Fleck’s study applies literary and ethnographic analysis to the memoirs of drug users, respecting the authors as legitimate voices who relate experiences from an “expert” viewpoint. “How can one write an authentic, truthful, reliable memoir about an experience always already presumed to be inauthentic, untrue, unreliable?” she asks.

In her dissertation, she closely reads the memoirs of a 19th-century opium addict and a 1980s crack user, among others, and considers questions of personal and societal responsibility. Her approach breaks down traditional stereotypes of drug users as helpless victims, pathological addicts, irresponsible derelicts and poster children for the recovery movement. She sorts out the truth and falsehood in all those standpoints and traces back how they serve ideological and political agendas.

Fleck was awarded her doctorate over the summer and now teaches at a community college. She considered becoming professionally involved in harm-reduction work but concedes, “I’m starting to realize that the thing I love most right now is teaching.” In its own way, she says, teaching is a form of harm reduction for the future.

Fleck tries to incorporate the basic tenet of harm reduction into her own life. “I think, ‘What is the actual thing we need to fix?’ and then you just fix it. When you stop feeling like you have to figure out what your stand is on something, it’s very freeing. I’m not judging: I’m just trying to solve problems.”

For Fleck, harm reduction extends to animals too. She began rescuing the stray cats she encountered on the streets, finding them homes in the Penn community. She joined a local cat-rescue group, CityKitties.org, and is now vice president. Aside from the five cats in her West Philly home, she keeps a horse at a suburban cooperative farm. “I have hens too,” she says, and raises them at her house.

“I give them food and leftover table scraps. They lay eggs, and I eat the eggs.” Having chickens didn’t hurt her academic career either. “I would always bring my committee members eggs,” she laughs.

Some of her students have followed her example, becoming involved in harm reduction and other volunteer work. “I don’t really get how activism and scholarship don’t connect,” she says. “Even if my students don’t focus explicitly on HIV prevention or drug use, I try to encourage them to think about themselves as citizens of an intellectual community with an obligation to the world.”

Mark Wolverton is a freelance writer and author living in Bryn Mawr, Pa.
It only takes a few minutes of conversation with Steven Hahn, the Roy F. and Jeannette P. Nichols Professor of American History, to realize he’s that professor. The professor every student hopes for. The one who inspires and challenges. The professor who makes you feel that college just might be the life-changing experience you’ve heard so much about.

In fact, it’s so easy to be captivated by Hahn’s engaging personality that you might forget a Pulitzer Prize rests among his many accomplishments. But for Hahn, studying history is not about plaudits and prizes. That’s what he teaches his students. He tells them that achievement is built on passion and an inner drive to create something great and lasting. His love for history extends from a passion for grassroots politics to a drive to uncover and tell the lost stories that have shaped the United States.

As a college student at the University of Rochester in the early 1970s, he took part in the antiwar protests that broke out on America’s campuses during the Vietnam War. His penchant for activism, in fact, suggested work as a political organizer. But after leading an abortive protest against war-related research on the campus — he and other students occupied the university administration building — Hahn wondered about his self-confidence and effectiveness. And after meeting politicized graduate students from the history department, he began to move in new intellectual directions.

Hahn came to recognize that being politically active in the present required an understanding of the past. He discovered that history was about more than major figures and big public events. It could also be the story of ordinary people generating change within their own communities. And because he wanted to stay politically involved, he turned to the study of history.

Along with his activist students, Rochester’s history department was guided by the faculty’s passion for scholarship that was socially and politically meaningful. Their energy inspired Hahn. One of his early mentors, Professor Herbert Gutman, read aloud in the classroom from his then-yet-to-be-published book *The Black Family in Slavery and Freedom, 1750-1925*. Gutman’s excitement and the level of seriousness he brought to the subject made Hahn feel that “history was the most important thing you could do.” He still has his undergraduate course notes.

While Gutman inspired delight in history, he also stressed the importance of good scholarship — history that looks at a variety of primary sources and original perspectives, that unsettles the accepted wisdom, spawns new questions and uncovers new interpretations. The lesson stayed with Hahn, who believes that socially and politically valuable history, with all its controversies, can’t just be “good” history; it has to be history that surpasses established standards.

These lessons brought Hahn to Yale for graduate school, where his interests centered on the study of humble white southerners who did not own slaves and who eventually supported the radical Populist Party (the subject of his doctoral dissertation and first book). But in a graduate research seminar, he also examined the African-American transition from slavery to freedom, and while sifting through reels of microfilm from the National Archives, he came upon a set of labor reports from Mississippi. There, he found an account of former slaves leaving work on Saturdays and walking as many as 25 miles to attend a political meeting. The episode occurred very soon after black men had won the elective franchise in 1867, and it seemed to confound the prevailing view in the historical literature that portrayed African-Americans as politically inert or easily manipulated. Thinking that there might be a great deal more to learn about African-American grassroots politics, both before and after emancipation, Hahn determined to uncover the stories as soon as he could.

After publishing his first book, *The Roots of Southern Populism*, he began to piece together the history of black political activism in the rural South. But finding information about a group ignored by history — and not literate in ways easily

“For a long time, the history of the South was written by white Southerners, many of whom were apologists for what had happened under slavery and segregation.”
accessible to us — meant turning to census tracts, organizational records, petitions and newspapers. Any one of these sources might offer a small detail or glimpse, but together they told the tale of a political movement. Hahn discovered that slaves had a surprising awareness of local and national politics and that they would later have a deeper understanding of the Civil War and Reconstruction than many of their white counterparts.

Unearthing a lost political movement required years of research and, like many middle-class kids, Hahn had to explain and defend his proposed vocation to a skeptical family. From his parents’ vantage point, becoming a college professor didn’t make good sense. But Hahn’s devotion to the lives of the people he studied kept him at it, and he had the benefit of support from his peers. “When I was in college,” he notes, “going after the big bucks was generally frowned upon while pursuing something socially meaningful was admired.”

Rural slaves and freedpeople in the South may appear marginal to the great currents of history, but to Hahn, African-American history is central to U.S. — indeed to world — history. It deserves the widest possible interest and attention, he says, and we have much to gain from the range of new perspectives and interpretations that will necessarily develop.

In 2004, the Pulitzer Prize board seemed to agree. The more Hahn uncovered, the harder he strove to construct a powerful narrative describing black political worlds that many historians had ignored. The result was A Nation Under Our Feet: Black Political Struggles in the Rural South from Slavery to the Great Migration, a politically edgy book written for both a scholarly and non-academic audience. In addition to a Pulitzer, the book earned the Bancroft Prize in American History and the Merle Curti Prize in Social History from the Organization of American Historians.

Hahn now writes for The New Republic and is at work on a history of the United States from 1840 to 1900, which will be published as part of the multi-volume Penguin History of the United States. In the fall, he delivered the Nathan I. Huggins Lectures in African-American History at Harvard. (Soon to be published.)

Through his scholarship, Hahn tries to give a voice to people and movements overlooked by historians. “For a long time,” he explains, “the history of the South was written by white Southerners, many of whom were apologists for what had happened under slavery and segregation. But there were also extremely important African-American scholars whose groundbreaking work the mainstream press refused to publish.”

In one of his Huggins lectures, Hahn explored why historians have shown so little interest in Marcus Garvey and especially in his organization, the Universal Negro Improvement Association. Started by Garvey in 1916, the UNIA mobilized people of African descent across the Atlantic world toward the goal of an independent African nation. While the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and the American Civil Rights Movement have attracted enormous attention, the story of Garvey and his followers has not, despite the millions who were drawn to the UNIA and its message. Hahn suggests that Garvey’s project, like the forgotten activism of former slaves and freedpeople, does not fit well into a dominant liberal integrationist outlook. Historians with such a perspective, he observes, “tend to see politics coming to slaves and black people more generally from outside of their own communities. Historians tend to privilege and lend legitimacy to African-American struggles for inclusion and assimilation, but they regard African-American interest in separatism and nationalism as the products of failure and defeat, as somehow lacking in integrity.”

Hahn carries years of teaching experience and has won several distinguished teaching awards. He knows that students hunger for transformative experiences, and he strives to be the kind of professor who provides them. Greg Downs, G’06, is a former graduate student of Hahn’s and is currently an assistant professor of history at the City College of New York. He remembers Hahn as a teacher who “genuinely listens to your ideas” and “asks tough but helpful questions.” Downs adds, “There are many wonderful historians, but there are only a few people who seem to really redefine the field, and [Steve Hahn] is accomplishing that right now. By the time he’s done, a lot of the things we say about the nation’s history will be different. He’s forcing us to rethink what politics is and how it works in the United States.”

Melissa Field is a freelance writer based in Philadelphia. She currently works for the International Area Studies Department at Drexel University.
What if Mark Twain’s beloved character Huckleberry Finn were brought into the 21st century and outfitted with the latest communications technology? That’s one of the many possibilities Gabe Crane, C’08, explored this past summer as he embarked on the Mississippi Project. Crane, an English major with a creative writing emphasis, and three of his friends paddled down the Mississippi River in two canoes and traveled the 2,000-plus miles between Minneapolis and New Orleans. Along the way, Crane wrote about his experiences on a blog that he maintained with a Treo, a handheld cell phone/PDA hybrid. The device was provided by the Center for Programs in Contemporary Writing (CPCW) and the Kelly Writers House, which gives seed funding and sponsorship for a variety of innovative student writing projects.

An avid outdoorsman, Crane had long been enchanted with the idea of a canoe trip that would not only allow him to navigate the American wilderness but would also reveal a novel perspective on American civilization. He was also inspired by the narrative journalism of John McPhee, whom he studied in a Writers House Fellows Seminar taught by Al Filreis, the Kelly Family Professor of English, faculty director of the Writers House and director of CPCW. Crane says he chose the Mississippi because the river’s important symbolic and historical role in American culture and literature made it the perfect place to engage in a literary adventure.

Although it employs new technology, the Mississippi Project resurrects venerable literary traditions. Just as Twain’s The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn is a classic bildungsroman — a novel that portrays the protagonist’s journey to personal development — Crane too learned much about himself in what he calls the “condensed maturation period” brought about by the project. And in the vein of the literary journalism practiced by McPhee, Crane’s writing about the real people and places he encountered helps define the life of this country. From the local high school graduation Crane and his friends attended in Minnesota, to the generous stranger who fed and sheltered them in Mississippi, to the devastation that still plagues New Orleans two years after Hurricane Katrina, the trip made plain the heterogeneous character of America.

“It opens your mind to the fact that this country is an incredibly diverse place,” Crane says. “There is something remarkable about the American spirit that we manage to hold it together.”

Filreis, who encouraged Crane to add the technology dimension to his project, says the act of blogging allowed Crane to imbue these traditions with a cutting-edge sense of immediacy because he was able to engage the audience in a literal present tense rather than one that is a fictional construct.

“You have this kid, who can write like a dream, enabled by a little handheld computer to take us on his trip,” Filreis says. “In a way this is the best of reality media — that is to say, it has the new 21st-century Internet-age ubiquitous-connectivity and present-tenseness about it — combined with traditional, thoughtful literary attentiveness and speculation.”

Gabe Crane’s Mississippi Project blog can be read at http://writing.upenn.edu/mississippi.html.

—PRIYA RATNESHWAR
Filming the Middle East
HISTORY THROUGH THE LIVES OF THOSE WHO LIVE IT
In the opening scene of the film *Paradise Now*, a young Palestinian woman and an Israeli soldier stare long and deep into each other’s eyes. Their lingering gaze at an army checkpoint suggests love, but it’s not. Is it suspicion? Defiance? Hatred? It’s hard to say, but it is intimate, pointing up the irony of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Or is it a paradox where each side knows the other with a lover’s closeness and, at the same time, neither really understands the enemy in their midst?

It’s impossible to say for sure, but it makes rich fodder for discussion, and that’s exactly what happens in Eve Troutt Powell’s history course, Filming the Middle East. *Paradise Now* is one of over 20 movies the class viewed by filmmakers from Egypt, Israel, Lebanon, Iran, Syria, Afghanistan and elsewhere in this troubled region. Balanced with reading assignments from history texts, the films probe how different “national cinemas” and ethnic or religious viewpoints characterize Egyptian political history, the roles of women, the creation of Israel, the experience of poverty, the Palestinian diaspora, the Iranian revolution and much more.

Powell, an associate professor of history and an expert on the modern Middle East, says the course grew out of her efforts to show students how American films and news media distort the region. “I want the students to hear the voices of Middle Eastern artists and see how they look at history,” she explains. “I try to get the students to entertain the possibility that there are other ways of looking at it.”

Movies can part the curtains of political reality and historical fact and reveal people as more than one-dimensional types depicted in slogans and headlines and Hollywood cartoon villains. “Students are used to getting their information from screens,” she notes. “Watching a film, they get the look I’m waiting for. They’re lost in it. They can’t distance themselves from it. They see it in me too.” After the screenings, the class crowds to the front of the room, eager to offer their own interpretations or to take issue with the directors and each other.

“Before I took this course, the Middle East was an abstract concept to me,” reports Julia Cohen, C’10. “Viewing the films, I found myself in Middle Eastern shoes, experiencing the frustration, joy, fear and relief — and hoping for some kind of happy ending.”

English major Dave Mangum, C’07, observes, “In texts, we analyze things in military, economic, political and sociological terms but usually overlook the personal responses like doubt and poignant personal histories. The riveting story neither condones the bombing nor condemns the bombers, but looks behind the militancy at the truth and confusion and humor that attend the mundane tasks of getting ready to kill by killing yourself. The movie ends with a bomber seated in a crowded bus. The scene cuts to white, and credits roll down the screen in silence. Powell flicks on the light. Everyone has “the look.”

“These films show me that the Middle East contains more political, religious and personal complexity than I had thought,” Mangum says. “Seeing these issues acted out by real people, I’m reminded of how cautiously I think external powers should tread.”
An Ideal Partnership
Alumnus, trustee, overseer, chair, donor — many words can be used to describe Christopher Browne, C’69, and his relationship with the School of Arts and Sciences. However, none is more apt than this: friend.

Shortly after his graduation in 1969, Browne began what would become a lifelong association with his beloved alma mater. He joined the SAS Board of Overseers in 1982 and became its chair in 1999. A Penn trustee since 1991, he was named a charter trustee in 2001. This longstanding involvement has made him a partner in the School’s growth and development.

Pleased with the impact of his previous gift to endow five professorships, Browne has chosen to build on his past philanthropy by endowing five more chairs across the humanities, the social sciences and the natural sciences. This gift reflects his continued commitment to Dean Bushnell’s vision and the future of SAS by supporting its very foundation: faculty.

Said Bushnell, “To achieve our goals in research and education, we must begin with a faculty of unquestioned distinction — a faculty whose members are dedicated to teaching and mentoring, and who are not only well versed in their own disciplines but also able to move across fields to develop new areas of knowledge. Chris understands this, and his generosity — combined with his commitment to academic distinction in research, teaching and open dialogue — make him an ideal partner for any dean.”

Browne, who is also a co-chair of the University’s Making History campaign, believes that supporting the School is critical to Penn’s future. “My long involvement with the University has been motivated by my desire to see that the University that I leave behind is even better than the one that helped to shape me as an undergraduate,” he said. “That can’t happen without a strong School of Arts and Sciences.”

Friendly Competitors
The families of Michael and Linda Jesselson and Jay and Jeanie Schottenstein share more than a history of philanthropy and a commitment to Jewish learning and cultural preservation: both couples are Penn parents; Mr. Jesselson and Mr. Schottenstein are business colleagues; and both men are avid collectors of Judaica with a friendly competition between them.

After getting to know Penn through their children’s experiences and learning more about Penn’s Center for Advanced Judaic Studies (CAJS), the families decided to pool their common interests and their belief in the importance of Jewish scholarship and chose to support the University with a $4 million gift. A portion of the Jesselins’ and Schottensteins’ gift is supporting the general endowment of CAJS, and in recognition of that partnership, the second-floor reading room of the center will be named the Schottenstein-Jesselson Library. The center serves as the only institution devoted exclusively to postdoctoral research on the Jewish experience in all its cultural and historical manifestations.

The remainder of the gift has been used to endow the Schottenstein-Jesselson Curator of Judaica Collections in Penn’s Libraries. Arthur Kiron has been named the inaugural curator. The University’s Judaica collection — one of the largest in the world with more than 400,000 volumes — is housed in five of Penn’s 15 libraries. The librarianship is the first of its kind at the University and sends a powerful message to the world that Penn values the permanence, nurturance and future of all its library collections.

Mr. Schottenstein and Mr. Jesselson may be friendly competitors, but their friendship and their families are united through a legacy of supporting Jewish scholarship. Now Penn is strengthened by that legacy as well.
Partners in Leadership

After a recent event organized by the Fox Leadership Program, a student remarked to the Fox faculty director, “Professor Dilulio, that guy was incredible.” John Dilulio, C’80, G’80, who is also the Frederic Fox Leadership Professor of Politics, Religion and Civil Society, asked if she was referring to the speaker, a former government official and ambassador. “The speaker was great,” she said, “but I mean the man whom I sat next to. In two minutes, he gave me the best advice I’ve ever gotten.”

That man was Robert Fox, C’52, and Dilulio says such supportive gestures are characteristic of Fox’s deep commitment to helping Penn students make the most of their abilities. Fox and his wife, Penny, established the Fox Leadership Program in 1999 and endowed it this year with a gift of $10 million. The program combines coursework, service experiences and events featuring leaders from a variety of fields to empower and equip undergraduates to assume leadership roles. Fox students learn leadership skills by solving real-world problems. For example, the Fox program has sent students to participate in Hurricane Katrina relief efforts since September 2005. It recently expanded its commitment by launching the Fox Leadership in New Orleans, Louisiana (FLINOLA) program, part of the largest university-based service initiative directed toward Katrina relief.

Fox credits Dilulio, who holds one of three chairs established with the program, for making the Fox program what it is today. “If you know John Dilulio, you know he devotes 110 percent to whatever he’s involved in,” Fox says. “He believes in what we’re trying to do, and he believes it’s important to get as many students as possible to understand and participate in leadership training.”

Fox’s vision was to create a program that would put Penn at the forefront of leadership education. Dilulio says the Fox program has done just that by “deepening the University’s dedication to real, problem-focused learning that practices — not just teaches or preaches — leadership.” Thanks to Fox’s and Dilulio’s investment in Penn’s students, the Fox program’s future promises further success. “My sense is that the program is just going to continue to grow,” Fox says. “I’m really excited about what we’ve got going here.”

To view an audio slideshow about FLINOLA’s work, see “Remembering New Orleans” at www.sas.upenn.edu/video.
The Society of Arts and Sciences recognizes individuals who have enhanced the excellence of the School of Arts and Sciences by giving $100,000 or more over the last five years. Its members embody the spirit of the School with their dedication to achieving and maintaining distinction in the liberal arts. They demonstrate a unique awareness of the importance of balancing tradition and innovation in higher education and champion both in equal measure. Their vision inspires our pursuit of excellence, and their generous support moves us forward.

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The support of the Society’s lifetime members, those who have contributed a total of $1 million or more to the School, sustains the University’s scholarly tradition in the liberal arts. The School is proud to acknowledge these extraordinary donors.

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List current as of June 30, 2007
On February 8, 2007, I became the oldest person and only the third American to complete the 16-nautical-mile Cook Strait Swim.

I depart Miami on Super Bowl Sunday with Gene Sardzinski, who has crewed for me on all my long swims. We arrive in New Zealand on their national independence day.

After a nap and lunch, we phone Philip Rush, the organizer of the swim, who holds the record for a three-way English Channel Crossing. He tells us I will be the first swimmer that day. A doctor doing research on hypothermia comes to the hotel the night before to assess my physical condition. She gives me a capsule that contains a thermometer to monitor my body temperature.

On swim day, the wake-up call comes at 3 a.m. We pack up food and gear, and go down to meet Philip, who is towing the orange inflatable boat that will accompany me. The water is cool. About a minute later, I begin swimming.

At first, my goggles leak. After the third feed, I ask Gene to prepare my other goggles. “Three-point-four kilometers in the first hour,” Philip yells. I feel good and pick up the pace. There is a bright sun. The water is clear, but I do not see anything. Only an occasional shadow swimming under me.

After the second hour, I feel faint and decide to slow down. My rhythm is good. I can see the shore of the south island as we inch closer. From the orange inflatable, Philip is gesturing to me. Gene handles the feedings and takes pictures.

At five-and-a-half hours, the salt water has taken its toll, and I vomit. Not terrible, but I drink only water at the next feeding. The water temperature is changing rapidly here. Maybe it’s the currents. It interrupts my rhythm and wears me down.

As we get closer, the tidal flow picks up to five knots — too fast to swim against — so I swim at an angle toward the shore. I am exhausted and have trouble focusing. After being in the water for nine hours, my instinct is to swim directly toward the goal rather than angling away from it.

At the pre-swim meeting, Philip indicated that because of the rocky coast, I would not have to land and stand up. “Just get close,” he told me. Now I wonder what that means. Philip and Gene yell at me to keep swimming. I come close but miss the island by 400 yards.

Despite the sun, my body temperature has dropped to 93 degrees. I can barely move my arms. “Follow me around the rocks,” Philip orders. The tide is flowing so fast I have trouble swimming with the inflatable. He leads me out of the current and finds an eddy. “Go swim to that point,” Philip directs. “That will be the finish.”

After 10 hours and 26 minutes, I touch the rocks and hear cheering as my nausea culminates in a huge eruption. Somehow, I swim back to the inflatable and grab hold. Philip pats me on the head, a gesture that means job well done.

T. Scott Coleman, C’76, swam the English Channel in 1996. He lives in Boca Raton, Fla., with his wife, Yasmine, W’76, and daughters Kristen, C’07, and Laura.
Long before becoming an associate professor of music, Guthrie Ramsey was a jazz pianist. His father taught him his first chords, but Dr. Guy refined his skill and funk at all-night jam sessions in Southside Chicago clubs and gigs on the Chitlin’ Circuit. He still performs, now with Dr. Guy’s MusiQology, the jazz ensemble whose music Ramsey composes and arranges. The band’s new CD is Y the Q?

To purchase the CD, visit http://guthrieramsey.com/MusiQology/about-y-the-q.html.