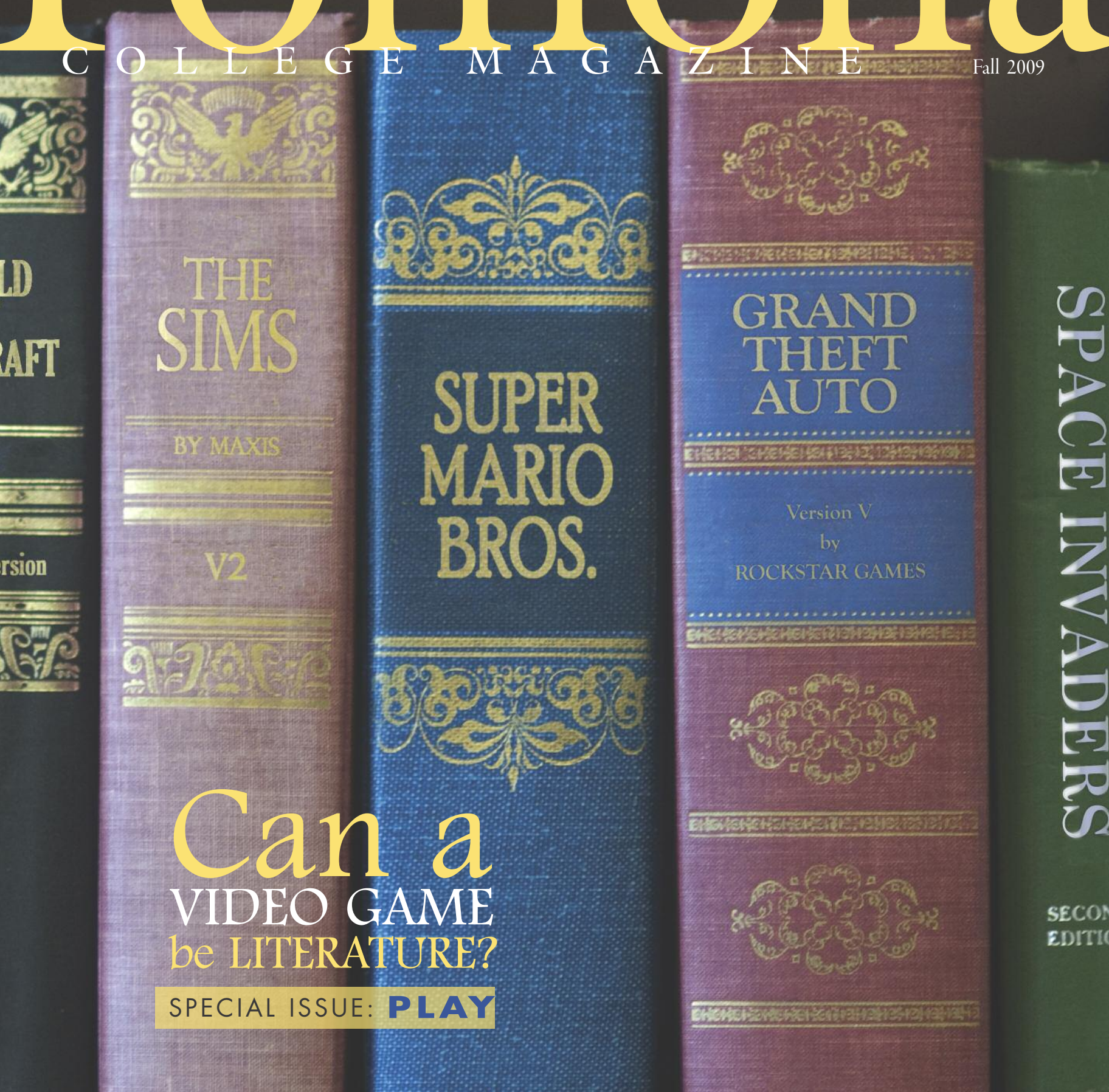


INSIDE: THE CURATOR OF COOL / INDISPENSABLE PLAYTHINGS / A PLACE IN THE SUN

# Pomona

C O L L E G E M A G A Z I N E Fall 2009



Can a  
VIDEO GAME  
be LITERATURE?

SPECIAL ISSUE: **PLAY**



# The Chemistry of Play

Having just read Stephen Johnson’s wonderful book, *Mind Wide Open*, I find myself going around these days trying to translate my own internal states and urges into the underlying language of brain chemistry. It’s an amusing, sometimes enlightening, occasionally liberating game.

For instance, there are all the varied emotional states we associate with happiness. That Zen-like contentment that comes from a calming spritz of norepinephrine. The sense of fulfillment and pride that comes when dopamine bonds to certain receptors inside the brain. The exhilaration and sense of boundless energy that are the signs of a serotonin high. And don’t forget the blast of pure pleasure that comes from those famous opiates of the human chemistry set, the endorphins. If the brain is designed to encourage certain activities and discourage others with a carrot-and-stick approach, you can think of these brain chemicals as as a range of supersized carrots.

Which brings me in a roundabout way to the subject of this issue—*play*.

Like most concepts that mean a lot to us, the word is difficult to define. In fact, it gains much of its meaning in contrast to its supposed opposite. As in: *All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy*. The classic distinction is that work is dutiful and productive while play is fun and frivolous.

That started me wondering about the chemical difference between work and play. After all, when we find something enjoyable, we’re really talking about endorphins and their fellow travelers, aren’t we? If play is so unproductive, why does the body reward it with all those chemical carrots?

One answer is that it isn’t really unproductive at all. Anyone who’s watched baby animals knows that juvenile play is a kind of rehearsal for things adults need desperately to know. Kittens practice stalking and pouncing. Baby rabbits seem to practice randomly starting and bounding about. Baby humans practice all those complex social interactions so vital to life in a tribe.

But what happens when you really need those behaviors in order to survive? When the cat has to stalk and pounce to keep from starving? When the rabbit has to start and bound to keep from being eaten? When the human—what?—has to go to work to keep from going hungry and being evicted?

In other words, what happens when play turns into work?

The answer, I suppose, depends on whether you like your job. If you don’t, one result is likely to be boredom, which may be related to a drop in dopamine. Or worse, this may be where another chemical enters the picture. Cortisol isn’t in the panoply of the brain’s happy drugs—the opposite, in fact. Called the stress hormone, cortisol is involved in gearing the body up to fight or flee. You know the feeling—sweaty palms, elevated heart rate, difficulty sleeping. Cortisol isn’t about fun—it’s about staying on guard, surviving.

Which may explain why adult humans still love to play. They need a fun fix in order to get all that brain chemistry back into balance after a day’s work.

But if you love your job, what’s the difference between work and play? I frequently tell my boss I spent the day playing—and I mean it. Designing, writing, doing illustrations—these are what I did for fun as a boy. So what if they’re productive? That doesn’t mean they have to be work, right?

So what is play? In my book, it’s anything done in a playful spirit—done, that is, without immediate regard for results but only for the joy of the doing. As I am doing now, despite the pressing deadline, despite the empty space to be filled. And getting my reward deep inside my brain.

—Mark Wood

## Pomona

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## Ballroom Beginnings

While attending the class of 1959’s 50th reunion this spring, we went to The Claremont Colleges’ “Made Modern” ballroom dance concert in Big Bridges. The concert was very well attended, both by the local community and by students and alumni. Needless to say, our national title holders did a superb job.

We watched the performance with some pride, too, as our son, David Newman ’84, played a small but very key role in the formation of the ballroom dance group. “Gaye Smith introduced ballroom dance to The Claremont Colleges by teaching a single (dance) class at Pomona,” as we read in the concert’s program notes. Less well known is the fact that David, who had been a student of Gaye’s while in high school, brought Gaye to Pomona at a time when ballroom dancing was not a popular activity there.

Dave is modest and will only describe his role as a “butterfly effect” in action, but as proud parents we’d like to read this historical background into the record before it’s totally forgotten.

—Peter Newman ’57  
Mary Stone Newman ’59  
Westlake Village, Calif.

## Slow Down, Print Lives

It just happens that the spring issue of *Pomona College Magazine* arrived in my snail-mailbox the same day as the alumni magazine of the East’s most notable Ivy League university. The contrast between the two publications could not be more striking. While the former was a brilliant display of graphic design, the latter was a higgledy-piggledy of images and text of the sort that our multi-screened TV news broadcasts now favor. The former was a perfect example of *Slow Journalism*, which is akin to *Slow Food*.

Just as fast food is its own kind of beast, so fast journalism, with its gulp-it-down-quick-and-move-on news, does one kind of thing but not another. *Slow Journalism* recognizes the deep pleasure in lingering over double-page spreads, leafing pages forwards and backwards, letting fingertips respond to the

texture of glossy paper, examining at leisure the significance of photos and illustrations. It takes time to absorb the wit and skill of origami dinosaurs, for instance.

For a magazine to imitate an electronic format only hastens the death of publications conceived and printed the old-fashioned way. Ironically, this issue of *PCM* embodies the exact opposite of its purported message about “The Coming Extinction” of newsprint. Every page reeks of “thingness,” of the full sensuous experience of holding a magazine in your hands in order to touch it, see it, smell it, hear it as the pages rustle, taste the words and images as they unfold in narrative sequence. At whatever speed fast journalism moves in its takeover, it may displace but it can never replace the slow, any more than a Coke and fries can replace the experience of a slowly cooked and savored meal, where time is one of the essential ingredients.

—Betty Fussell ’48  
New York, N.Y.



The articles by alumni journalists in “The Coming Extinction” of the news issue (Spring/Summer 2009) hit home for me. Four years earlier, I attended the “Headlines and Deadlines” symposium at Alumni Weekend. Featuring Bill Keller ’70, Mary Schmich ’75 and Adam Rogers ’92, the event set off creative sparks that would even-

tually rocket me into a new news venture.

Prior to attending that alumni weekend in 2005, I had been a freelance technology writer for many publications with a great stint writing regularly for *Investor’s Business Daily*—until 2002 when the dot-com bomb fell, obliterating many freelancers. The need for tech journalists was drying-up, but I did manage to write for such trade publications as *Wireless Week*.

In September 2007, I founded *Wireless and Mobile News* on the wing of blogging software and a prayer. The prayer must have gotten to Pomona, the goddess of fruit and fruitfulness. The Web site has grown into a profit-bearing tree.

When *PCM* published the news-extinction issue, I was a fellow in the Knight Digital Media Center’s News Entrepreneur Boot Camp at USC, where we discussed the same issues covered in your publication. On the final day, we presented our media proposals to angels, investors and “monetizers.” My theatre major kicked in—it was as if George C.

Wolfe ’76 himself had directed me. The angels were amazed by my breaking concepts and became animated with questions.

No funding has ensued (yet.) But I’m making a lot more money than I ever did in the theatre.

—Lynn Walford ’79  
Pasadena, Calif.

## Remembering a Friend

We were shocked and deeply saddened to learn of the death of our dear friend and classmate, Wendy “Byrd” Ehlmann in August 2008. Byrd was a fearless iconoclast who delighted in the absurd and was a resolute defender of the ridiculous. Those of us who were fortunate enough to know her remember that besides being a fantastic voiceover artist, a guide to Egyptian ruins and a writer for *The Dating Game*, Byrd was also an incredibly generous and loving friend. We are grateful that she left an indelible memoir in her remarkable blog: <http://www.fraughtwithperil.com>. If anyone would like to share memories of Byrd, we would love to see those posted on her blog.

—Jean Leavenworth ’78  
Portland, Ore.



## Debating the Alma Mater

Ad hominem? Personal attacks against students? That doesn’t sound like sound journalism to me.

In the Letterbox section of the latest edition of *PCM*, an alumnus has a letter published that states: “If he does speak for his generation, they are the poorer for it.”

Here Jerry, the alumnus, talks about me in expressing his feelings about an interview I gave in a previous feature about the conversation surrounding the alma mater.

His remarks constitute a personal attack on my character, and I am offended.

In terms of responsibility, when a publication publishes even a secondary account that attacks someone, that publication itself is attacking that person.

I’ve always welcomed any alumnus or student who wants to discuss the matter in an intelligent manner. But when personal attacks are issued by an alumnus, their perspective is reduced to an angry rant.

Whether or not I constitute the voice of my generation on the matter, or how I convey that voice does not change the facts of the situation:

Richard Loucks conveyed in interviews and speeches that he did indeed write “Hail, Pomona, Hail” for a blackface show. He named the date and time, he described the show in detail, he named the cast members and he provided pictures.

The arguments in the letters published amount to no more than wishful thinking on the part of people who find the prevailing evidence inconvenient for how they wish reality was.

The alumni *wish* that Loucks is lying but they have no proof, and they have no case.  
—Cyrus Winston ’10  
Pomona College

Lee McDonald’s “better question” (from the Spring/Summer 2009 *PCM*) regarding “whether we trust Loucks’ memories from the 1950’s or the historical evidence from 1910-1911,” seems just the right issue to explore. Rosemary Choate’s further question in the same issue: “What went wrong?” begs us to do just that. So here is a bit of information which could help explain why the committee didn’t ask Lee’s question, or perhaps asked it too late.

I was working with Rosemary in the special collections room of Honnold Library when we came across the article in the Jan. 21, 1910 issue of *The Student Life* about the

use of the newly written song to close the baseball fundraiser. I said something like: “Look, the *SL* writer got the wrong name for the alma mater. He calls it ‘The Blue and White.’” Rosemary, being wiser, said: “Let’s look to see if there is actually a song called ‘Blue and White.’” So we ordered from the librarians past issues of the student handbooks. Sure enough, there was “The Blue and White,” but no “Hail! Pomona, Hail!” Clearly, the *SL* reporter got the name right. And, as it turned out, when “Hail! Pomona, Hail!” did appear in the handbook a couple of years later, “Blue and White” was dropped.

Usually when we ordered items, the librarians produced them almost instantly. When I asked about that, they indicated that some research had gone before and they expected more to follow, so they kept the asked for material handy. *But when we ordered the handbooks with the songs in them, we were told the librarians would have to go into the stacks to get them and it would take a while.* In other words, no one had yet looked at the documents which cleared up the problem of what the actual song closing the baseball fundraiser was. By the time Rosemary alerted them, the committee probably had pretty much made up its collective mind that the theory they set out to prove was right. A mind is a hard thing to change, as it turns out.

In the long run, a person must either agree with the Loucks’ memory of 50 years earlier or the contemporaneous *Student Life* account. The two can’t be harmonized. Recorded history is often conflicting, but we must move on, in this case lustily singing “Hail! Pomona, Hail!” complete with exclamation marks!

—Lee Harlan ’55  
Director of Alumni Relations, 1969-1998  
Claremont, Calif.

As a four-year member of the Glee Club during my Pomona years, I admit that I may be more attached to the Pomona College songs than are many alumni. I’ve been pleased to learn from the magazine plus contact with some of my former classmates that I am certainly not alone.

Thank you for continuing to print letters from alumni as well as so many interesting articles. I hope a “Committee on *Pomona College Magazine* Contents” is never considered! My words to President Oxtoby as well as the Board of Trustees continue to be, “Shame, shame on all of you!”

—Connie Barnett ’57  
San Francisco, Calif.

Although I don’t keep up with my former professors at Pomona, I do remember them and I do think they contributed in a positive way to who I am today. As we say in Texas, “When you drink the water, you should remember who helped dig the well.”

I have read with sadness about the passing of Professor Howard Young (Spanish) and Professor Fred Sontag (philosophy). On the other hand, I was pleased to read a letter by former Professor Lee C. McDonald in the Spring/Summer issue of *PCM*.

I will be eternally grateful to Pomona College. If I failed to achieve more it was my own fault. I love Pomona because of what its teachers tried to do for me and because of the friends I made when I was there.

Many alumni complained about the president’s decision to abolish the alma mater. I joined the protest. But today I feel like an Iranian student who shouted from a rooftop in the middle of the night, hearing only myself.

Most alumni don’t really know the Pomona College of today. ... We support the College and we go to reunions to celebrate yesterday. Yesterday is gone, but it’s nice to reminisce once in a while.

And God bless you, Professor McDonald and all the rest of you who helped us get through life!

—Clinton Cross ’61  
El Paso, Texas

I was interested in reading the “push-back” from Pomona’s alumni in regards to the College’s decision to somehow suspend the school song.

What gets my goat is that Pomona has gone completely P.C. in this regard. So, what else has changed in the last 40 years? Please, don’t tell me.

—Wayne Strickler ’66  
Tucson, Ariz.

### Correction

An article in the Spring/Summer issue, about a Pomona Student Union event in which professors discussed the Harry Potter books, misidentified one of the participating faculty members as Heather Williams. It was Susan McWilliams, assistant professor of politics, who took part in the event.

Alumni and friends are invited to send us their letters by email to [pcm@pomona.edu](mailto:pcm@pomona.edu) or by mail to the address on page 2. Letters are selected for publication based on relevance and interest to our readers and may be edited for length, style and clarity.

## Calendar / Fall 2009

### Music

More Information: (909) 607-2671 or [music@pomona.edu](mailto:music@pomona.edu).

**Oct. 22 Chirgilchin: Tuvan Throat Singers Lecture/Demonstration**—Thursday, 4:15 p.m., Lyman Hall. Thatcher Music Building. Lecture and demonstration of this ancient vocal tradition from Tuva, a small Russian province.

**Oct. 23 Friday Noon Concert**—Friday, 12:15 p.m., Balch Auditorium. Rachel Huang, violin; Roger Lebow, cello; Gayle Blankenburg, piano. Music by Villa-Lobos.

**Oct. 23 Chirgilchin: Tuvan Throat Singers**—Friday, 8 p.m., Bridges Hall of Music. From Tuva, a small Russian province, Chirgilchin richly creates this ancient vocal tradition in which one singer produces two or more voices simultaneously.

**Oct. 28 Student Recital**—8:15 p.m., Lyman Hall, Thatcher Music Building. Music spanning the ages performed by music majors and non-majors taking private instrumental and vocal lessons.

**Oct. 30 Friday Noon Concert**—12:15 p.m., Balch Auditorium. Margaret Parkins, cello; Genevieve Feiwen Lee, piano. Music by Beethoven and Janacek.

**Nov. 1 An Afternoon of Baroque Music**—3 p.m., Bridges Hall of Music. Alfred Cramer and Danielle Cummins, baroque violin; Roger Lebow, baroque cello; Carolyn Beck, baroque bassoon; Graydon Beeks, harpsichord. Music by Handel, Purcell and others.

**Nov. 1 ensembleGREEN**—7 p.m., Bridges Hall of Music. Elizabeth Hedman, violin; Kira Blumberg, viola; Lynn Angebrannndt, cello; Paul Sherman, oboe; James Sullivan, clarinet; Tara Speiser, bassoon; Susan Svrcek, piano. Music by Eric Lindholm, Tom Flaherty, Alec Wilder and Miklos Rosza

**Nov. 6 Friday Noon Concert**—12:15 p.m., Balch Auditorium. Rachel Huang, violin; Paul R. Bishop, piano. Music by Poulenc.

**Nov. 6 Senior & Junior Joint Recital**—8 p.m., Lyman Hall, Thatcher Music Building. Mollie McLaren ’10 mezzo-soprano, and Eddie Sayles ’11 tenor, with pianists Leanne Welds ’10 and Gayle Blankenburg. Music by J.S. Bach, Barber, Bellini, Copland, Purcell and Vaughan Williams.

**Nov. 8 Chamber Music with an Argentine Flair**—3 p.m., Bridges Hall of Music. Paul and Linda Rosenthal, violin; Kate Vincent, viola; Jack Sanders, guitar; Genevieve Feiwen Lee, piano. Music by by Guastavino, Piazzolla and others.

**Nov. 13 Friday Noon Concert**—12:15 p.m., Balch Auditorium. Jonathan Wright, violin; Stephan Moss, piano. Music by Faure and Nielsen.

**Nov. 13 & 15 Pomona College Band**—Friday, 8 p.m., & Sunday, 3 p.m., Bridges Hall of Music. Graydon Beeks, conductor. Music by Copland, Kohn, Lawrence and others.

**Nov. 14 Millennium Consort Singers: “Music Across Five Centuries”**—8 p.m., Bridges Hall of Music. Martin Neary, conductor. Music by J.S. Bach, Britten, Gibbons, Howells, McMillan, Mendelssohn, Tavener, and others.

### Readings, Lectures and Debates

**Oct. 21 Lecture: “The Mute Bones Speak: Relics and the Performance of Sanctity in the Cult of the Eleven Thousand Virgins of Cologne”**—7 p.m., Lebus Court, Room 113. Art historian Scott B. Montgomery will discuss the cult of St. Ursula and the Eleven Thousand Virgins of Cologne, one of the most widespread manifestations of collective sanctity in the Middle Ages.

**Oct. 28 Lecture: “U.S. Policing Power and the Transformation of Border Controls”**—4:15 p.m., Rose Hills Theatre. Peter Andreas (Brown University) on the militarization of the U.S.-Mexico border. Organized by The Hart Institute for American History.

**Oct. 28 Robbins Lecture Series, lecture #1: From Matter to Life: Chemistry? Chemistry!**—8 p.m., Seaver North Auditorium. Jean-Marie Lehn, who received the Nobel Prize in Chemistry in 1987.

**Oct. 29 Robbins Lecture Series, lecture #2: From Molecular Chemistry to Supramolecular Chemistry**—11 a.m., Seaver North Auditorium. Nobel laureate Jean-Marie Lehn.

**Oct. 29 Robbins Lecture Series, lecture #3: Supramolecular Chemistry and Self Organization**—4:30 p.m., Seaver North Auditorium. Nobel laureate Jean-Marie Lehn.

**Oct. 30 Robbins Lecture Series, lecture #4: From Constitutional Dynamic Chemistry Towards Adaptive Chemistry**—11 a.m., Seaver North Auditorium. Nobel laureate Jean-Marie Lehn.

**Oct. 30 Lecture: “Creating Cuisine in Early Modern Japan”**—4:15 p.m., Hahn Building, Room 107. Historian Eric Rath (University of Kansas-Lawrence) will explore lessons found in medieval and early modern culinary writings from Japan—including how to dine with a shogun, make solid gold soup, and sculpt with a fish.

**Nov. 3 Pacific Basin Institute Film Screening: Title TBA**—7 p.m., Rose Hills Theatre.

**Nov. 21 Corde à vide**—8 p.m., Bridges Hall of Music. Jubal Fulks, violin; Lorna Peters, harpsichord. Music by J.S. Bach, Couperin, Pandolfi, Rameau and Telemann.

**Nov. 30 Afro-Cuban Music & Dance**—8 p.m., Lyman Hall, Thatcher Music Building. Joe Addington, director. Pomona College Afro-Cuban Drumming Ensemble.

**Dec. 4 Friday Noon Concert**—12:15 p.m., Balch Auditorium. Quartet Euphoria: Rachel Huang, violin; Jonathan Wright, violin; Cynthia Fogg, viola; Tom Flaherty, cello. Music by Brahms.

**Dec. 4 & 6 Pomona College Choir**—Friday, 8 p.m., & Sunday, 3 p.m. Bridges Hall of Music. Donna M. Di Grazia, conductor. Mendelssohn: *Heilig, heilig ist Gott, der Herr Zebaoth*; G. Gabrieli: *Jubilate Deo*; Mendelssohn: *Mitten wir im Leben sind*; Barber: *Agnus Dei*; Orbán: *Daemon irrepit callidus*; Prior: *Play on, invisible harps*; Harris: *Bring us, O Lord*; Mendelssohn: *Verleih’ uns Frieden*

**Nov. 4 Lecture: Cultural Translation and Filmmaking in the Pacific**—4:15 p.m., Hahn Building, Room 101. Vilsoni Hereniko (Director of the Center for Pacific Islands Studies at the University of Hawaii) on translating feature films of minority cultures. Organized by the Pacific Basin Institute.

**Nov. 5 Lecture: Action in Plot and Performance of Noh and Greek Tragedy: A Comparison**—4:30 p.m., Clark Humanities Museum, Scripps College. Professor of Classics Mae Smethurst (University of Pittsburgh) discusses a category of the Japanese Noh theater, called *genzaino* (“realistic noh”, that shares elements with Greek tragedies. Organized by Scripps College, co-sponsored by PBI.

### Exhibitions

*The Pomona College Museum of Art hours: Tues.-Fri., 12-5 p.m.; Sat.-Sun, 1-5 p.m. More information: (909) 621-8283 or visit [www.pomona.edu/museum](http://www.pomona.edu/museum).*

**Aug. 25–Oct. 18 “Project Series 38: Constance Mallinson Nature Morte”**—In a detailed, highly rendered *trompe l’oeil* style, Constance Mallinson’s new paintings examine how we construct meaning from nature in an increasingly urbanized world.

**Aug. 25–Oct. 18 “The New Normal”**—“The New Normal” is an exhibition that brings together 13 artists who use private information as raw material and subject matter. Each offers access to the private sphere of the artists, strangers and public officials to question the forced and voluntary confessions making the private sphere public.

**Nov. 5 Lecture: Tsukioka Kogyo and the Popularization of Noh, 1890-1927-8** p.m., Clark Humanities Museum, Scripps College. Historian Richard J. Smethurst (University of Pittsburgh) discusses Japanese Noh theater, intimately connected with the late feudal order of the Edo Period. Organized by Scripps College, co-sponsored by PBI.

*gnädiglich*; Mendelssohn: “And then shall your light” from *Elijah*.

**Dec. 5 & 6 Pomona College Orchestra**—8 p.m. both days, Garrison Theatre. Eric Lindholm, conductor. Patrice Michaels ’78 soprano; Karl Kohn, piano. Songs by Satie, Tailleferre, Milhaud and Bernstein; Stravinsky: *Petrushka* (1947 version).

**Dec. 7 Giri Kusuma**—8 p.m., Bridges Hall of Music. Pomona College Balinese Gamelan; Nyoman Wenten, music director; Nanik Wenten, dance director. Contemporary and traditional music and dance of Bali.

**Dec. 8 & 9 Student Recitals**—7 p.m., both days, Lyman Hall, Thatcher Music Building. Music spanning the ages performed by music majors and non-majors taking private instrumental and vocal lessons.

**Dec. 12 Friday Noon Concert**—12:15 p.m., Balch Auditorium. Scripps Chamber Choir, Chuck Kamm, director.

**Nov. 6 Lecture: Takahashi Korekiyo and the Road Not Taken**—4:15 p.m., Hahn Building, Room 107. Historian Richard J. Smethurst (University of Pittsburgh) on former Japanese Prime Minister Takahashi Korekiyo. Organized by the Pomona College History Department and the Pacific Basin Institute.

**Nov. 9 Literary Series**—7 p.m., Ena Thompson Reading Room 108, Crookshank Hall. Poet Mei Mei Berssenbrugge (*I Love Artists: New and Selected Poems*, 2006).

**Nov. 19 Lecture: “all the slain soldiers”: Poetry and the American Civil War**—11 a.m., Rose Hills Theatre, Christanne Miller (SUNY-Buffalo) on Emily Dickinson, Walt Whitman and writing the Civil War. Organized by The Hart Institute for American History.

**Oct. 31–Dec. 20 “A Restless Country: Selections from the Permanent Collection”**—The exhibition explores trading patterns of native populations, the drive of the railroads and the valorization of car culture, and includes Danny Lyon’s *The Bikeriders*, Raymond Pettibon’s collaboration *Faster Jim*, William Henry Jackson’s railroad photographs, and selections from Pomona’s Native American art collection.

**Oct. 31–Dec. 20 “Project Series 39: Rachel Mayeri Primate Cinema”**—Rachel Mayeri will premiere a new video installation dealing with primates and their on-screen dramas. Mayeri’s work observes human nature through the lenses of primatology and media studies.

**Nov. 7 Opening Reception: “A Restless Country” and “Project Series 39: Rachel Mayeri Primate Cinema”**—5 p.m., Pomona College Museum of Art.

**Dec. 1 Pacific Basin Institute Film Screening: Title TBA**—7 p.m., Rose Hills Theatre.

**Dec. 8 Pacific Basin Institute Summer Tour Grant Winners Video Screenings**—12 p.m., Oldenberg Center. Grant-winning students present their films. Lunch is provided at no cost.

### Theatre & Dance

*Tickets are \$5 for faculty, staff, students and senior citizens, \$10 for general admission; season subscriptions are \$20 for faculty, staff, students and senior citizens, \$30 for general admission. Box Office: (909) 621-8525 or (909) 607-4375, from 11 a.m.-4 p.m., Mon.-Fri. More information: [www.theatre.pomona.edu](http://www.theatre.pomona.edu).*

**Nov. 19-22 Richard II by William Shakespeare**—8 p.m., Thursday-Saturday; and 2 p.m., Saturday –Sunday, Seaver Theatre. Directed by Leonard Pronko.

**Dec. 3-5 Fall Dance Concert**—Times TBA, Pendleton Dance Studio, Scripps College. A joint Pomona and Scripps College dance concert, directed by Lauri Cameron. (909) 621-8176.



# Frederick Sontag

The Robert C. Denison Professor of Philosophy

Even after being stabbed by a mentally-troubled student, Philosophy Professor Fred Sontag never recoiled from helping. The attack took place after Sontag picked the young man up from the police station following an arrest for misdemeanor charges. After getting treatment for his wound, Sontag helped hire a lawyer for his attacker, met with him in jail and pushed for him to be sent to a mental hospital instead of prison. “My genes lack something,” Sontag said after the 2000 incident. “I don’t seem to hold grudges.”

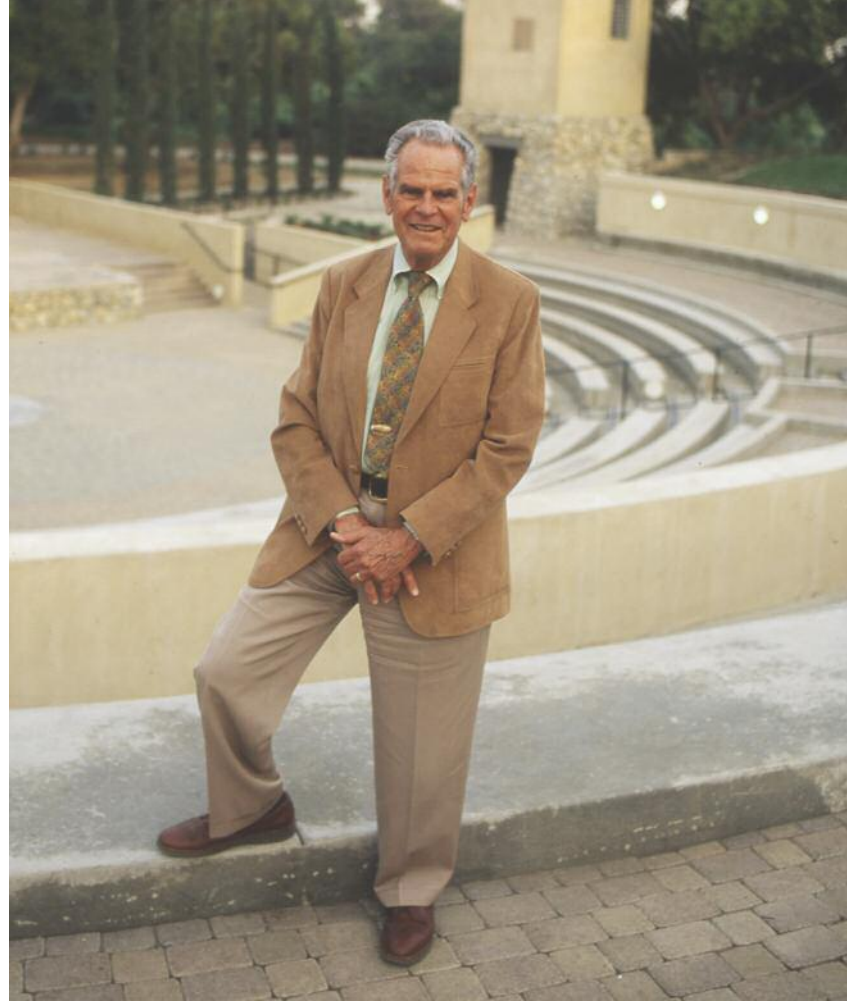
That extraordinary spirit benefited generations of Pomona students as Sontag became the longest-serving professor—57 years—in the College’s history; he formally retired only weeks before his death on June 14, 2009. Sontag’s passing set off an outpouring of remembrances from students and others he had helped over the years, whether assisting them in choosing their vocation or in getting out of a pinch. “For Fred, every student, however mischievous, is, as he would say, ‘really a good kid,’ deserving of his generous support and guidance,” said Stewart Smith ’68 during the May Commencement ceremony in which Sontag was awarded the Trustees’ Medal of Merit.

Professor Sontag was a prominent and productive scholar. In addition to teaching classes in existentialism, metaphysics and philosophy of religion, Sontag pursued a prolific writing career, resulting in the publication of some 28 books during his tenure, the last in 2008, along with more than 100 essays and articles in major publications. Three times department chair, Fred was named the Robert C. Denison Professor of Philosophy in 1972. He was three times honored as a Wig Distinguished Professor for excellence in teaching.

Sontag was born in Long Beach, Calif., on Oct. 2, 1924, the youngest of three children of M. Burnett Sontag and Cornelia (Nicholson) Sontag, both of whom died in his youth. He was reared by his grandmother and aunt, and after graduating from high school, joined the Army, rising to the rank of staff sergeant. He was stationed at a German P.O.W. camp in Mississippi where he developed a lifelong friendship with a prisoner in his charge.

Attending Stanford on the GI Bill, Sontag graduated with a B.A. in philosophy, *magna cum laude*, in 1949, also earning a Phi Beta Kappa key. A year later, he met Carol Furth, a recent graduate of UC Berkeley, at a summer camp on Fallen Leaf Lake. They were married in 1950 and moved to New Haven, Conn., where Fred earned a master’s degree and Ph.D. in philosophy from Yale. He was appointed to the faculty of Pomona College by President E. Wilson Lyon in 1952. Within a few years, son Grant Furth joined the family, followed by Anne Burnett.

In a 2002 *PCM* article, Sontag recalled that he hadn’t expected to stay at Pomona for long. “In a small college,” he



remembered thinking, “students would bother me.” Laughing, he explained that they did in fact “bother” him. “I had an office in Holmes Hall, and students did wander in and out of my office all the time. What I discovered, though, was that I enjoyed the contact.”

Over the decades, Sontag became known for tirelessly maintaining an intricate network of friendships. On the Pomona campus, Sontag served as long-time adviser to the Kappa Delta fraternity. He also presided at the weddings of many Pomona alumni, a benefit of his ordination in the United Church of Christ in 1974.

The Sontags traveled the world, spending sabbatical leaves at Union Theological Seminary in New York, Collegio di San Anselmo in Rome, the American Church in Paris and Cambridge University. As a visiting fellow or scholar, Fred Sontag lectured in Honolulu, Kyoto, Copenhagen and Pretoria, South Africa. As a Fulbright Fellow, he traveled and lectured extensively through Southeast Asia and India. Over the years he met with Desmond Tutu and Elie Wiesel, and in 1967 garnered a private audience with Pope Paul VI, who, upon learning that Sontag was a philosopher, took his hand and said, “Then we greet you as a friend.”

Closer to campus, Sontag was active in Claremont United Church of Christ, Congregational and served on the Board of Trustees of Pilgrim Place, the retirement community for Christian missionaries where he died in June. In addition to Carol, Grant and Anne, he is survived by his son-in-law, Paul Karch; three grandchildren, Rachel, Lydia and Chas Karch; and a number of nieces and nephews. ❖

—Don Pattison

## Memories

An intro philosophy course with Fred made me ditch economics immediately. As others have noted, he loved to see his students unsettled, mystified, doubting themselves and their inherited “wisdom.” I learned to think, finally, thanks to a lanky, wiry-eye-browed guy that loved to tell stories while shaking the loose watch on his wrist. I do not know anyone who has bridged the gap between the conceptual and actual worlds as well as Fred.

—Kent Callaghan '87

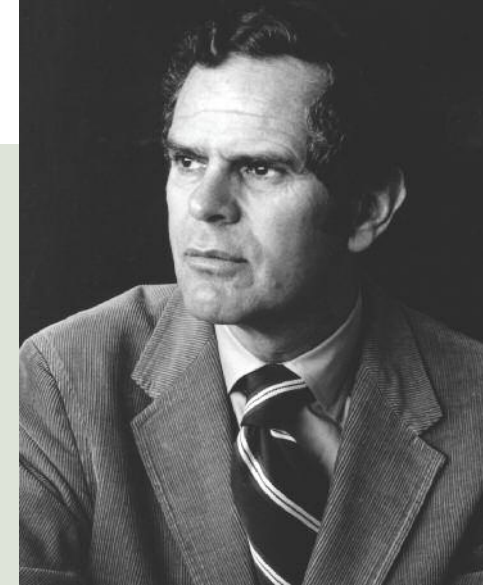
Dr. Frederick Sontag, the highly respected, fierce-eyed philosophy professor with the curious commitment to the Kappa Delta fraternity (a local fraternity with a deservedly proud reputation for being the bad guys), had a profound effect upon my life at a critical moment.

I had decided, after some soul-searching, not to compete for the Rhodes Scholarship that he and Dr. Edward Weismiller had been guiding me toward since I had been in their classes in college. I already had an Army commitment and I figured I might as well get on with my life. He wouldn’t accept that. He took the time to convince me that in 30 years nobody would be saying, “He could have been a Rhodes Scholar, but he didn’t try.” But if I got a Rhodes Scholarship, that it would change my life forever. I did, and it did.

—Kris Kristofferson '58

Fred Sontag gave me the power of the pen, the discipline to persuade and the courage to express myself in ways beneficial to my profession. He will always be my teacher and I his student.

—Clarence T. Sasaki '62, M.D.



(College of Law). I was frankly amazed at the knowledge of the student’s life and capacity for a professional career those long and beautifully written letters reflected. I had never before seen [such] recommendation letters—more like detailed character sketches written by a good novelist—and I have never seen such letters since.

—Jim McCall '58

He was my favorite professor. He showed me that there were limits to verbal reasoning that could be transcended by faith, resulting in unconditional love for the Lord and other people. He was my living example of Paul: how to be a saint while maintaining total intellectual integrity.

—Louis Dvorak '66

Like most Pomona professors, Fred always had time for students. But unlike any professor I have ever known, Fred took the initiative to seek you out, especially if he sensed that you needed help like I did. During a time of great doubt and depression, Fred called me more than once, invited me to have lunch at Frary, and then walked with me to class.

Fred’s counsel and encouragement literally saved my life. He suggested that I follow my call to ministry by applying to Yale, but supported me in my decision to go to Princeton Seminary. Thanks to Fred’s letter of recommendation and his persuasive manipulations behind the scenes, I managed to pass my comps in biology and chemistry and was able to train for ministry.

—John R. Springer (Jack) '57

Dr. Sontag will continue to be my mentor throughout my life, as he has been from September of my freshman year when I met him on the front steps of Pearsons, in my cut-offs and flip-flops, trying to talk him into giving me a place in his Existentialism class. Little did I know what that “yes” would entail. ... There are so many stories, places, reunions brought about by the love, humor and strength of Fred’s commitment. Fred married my husband Vince and me in 1985, christened our son, Alexander, in 1996, and helped me mourn my husband when he died in April 2007. Fred and Carol were by my side for each of these life events and for so many more.

—Anne Jacobson Nunno '75

When I left the practice of law for law-school teaching some 13 years after graduation from Pomona, Fred began sending me copies of the letter of recommendation he wrote for Pomona students applying to Hastings



Fred mentored our son Roger and made a huge impression on his life and decision to believe in himself. We visited the campus and expected the usual take-the-gang-out-to-dinner night, but Roger surprised us and said we were going to Professor Sontag’s office. He took the time out of his huge schedule to devote an evening to Roger and his parents. He followed Roger’s basketball career, graduate school, his marriage and his induction to the Hall of Fame at Pomona as a loving friend. His follow-up and support has been with our son all these years and his example will help Roger to pass on encouragement, faith and love to all.

—Helen and Dick MacDonell

I remember when I worked in the philosophy office seeing Professor Sontag walking down the hall each morning, making his familiar rounds. I remember how highly his students spoke of him and the stories, legends almost, that circulated among the philosophy majors of his past at Pomona College.

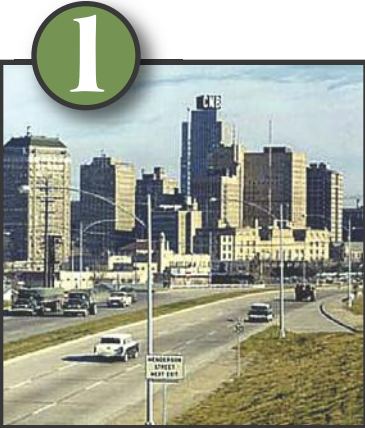
—G. Jake Nagel '09



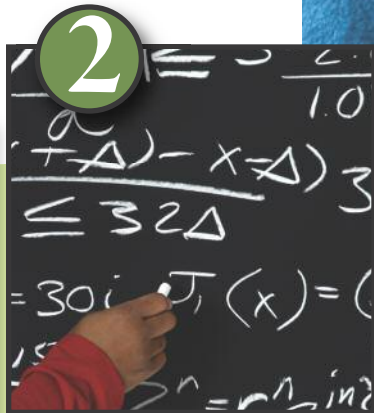
Spotlight / Cecilia Conrad

# HOW TO BECOME DEAN OF POMONA COLLEGE

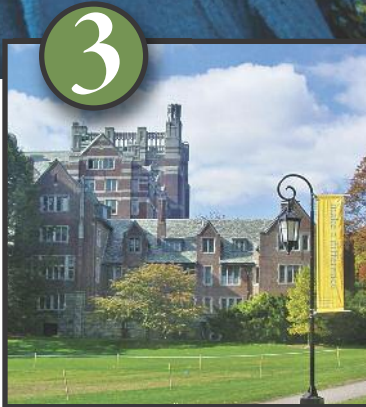
Over the summer, Cecilia Conrad became vice president and dean of Pomona College, the 13th person to be appointed to the academic deanship in Pomona's 122-year history. Here, in a nutshell—or rather, seven nutshells—is the essence of her story.



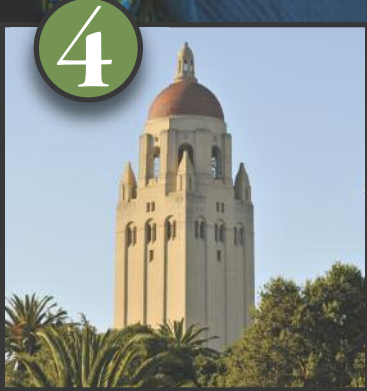
**1** Grow up in the '60s in racially divided Dallas as the only child of politically-active parents. Be the rebel at your strict parochial school. In the third grade, run an unauthorized lunchtime raffle that nets you a tidy \$1 profit. Get kicked out for it. Attend segregated public schools using worn textbooks handed down from the white schools. Celebrate as your surgeon-father becomes the first Black person elected to the Dallas school board.



**2** Do well in math while also developing an interest in public policy. As a teen, closely follow news about the creation of new international monetary agreements. Ponder questions like whether it's worth it to send men to the moon while there's so much poverty here on Earth. Grow accustomed to your parents enlisting you to help integrate various programs and activities. Attend your first school with a semblance of real desegregation—for your senior year of high school.



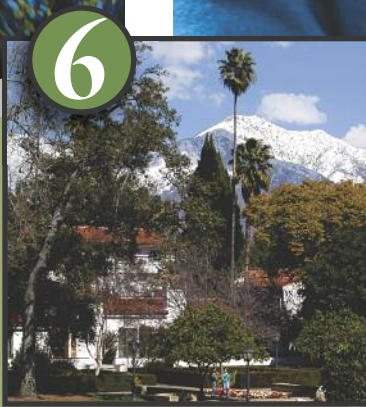
**3** Set off for Wellesley, already intent on majoring in economics. Take advantage of a series of summer internships and fellowships ranging from systems analysis of courts to forecasting telephone demand to educating returning veterans about trade-school rip-offs. Get your first exposure to Washington—and like it. Expect that you'll eventually go on to work in the policy arena for a government agency or NGO.



**4** Go west for grad school at Stanford, where you get your first taste of teaching. Enjoy the immediate payoff when a student "gets" something. Take particular delight in challenging students' preconceived notions about such issues as free trade. Decide to stay in academia—just for a while. Out of school, take your first job at a large research university. Quickly realize you want an atmosphere tilted more toward teaching. Land at Barnard College in New York, focusing your research on the impact of race and gender on economic status.



**5** Get lured into applying to Pomona by the persistent Professor Hans Palmer, after serving with him on a committee for the AP economics test. Succumb to Claremont's small-town charms and the appeal of good schools for your son and take a job as associate professor of economics in 1995. Take on a slew of roles beyond the College, from the economics board of *Black Enterprise* magazine to policy research for Washington think tanks to president of the National Economics Association. Find your classes at Pomona are in demand. Get named California's Carnegie Professor of the Year for 2002.



**6** Accept the position of associate dean for the challenge, to give back—and for a pay bump that coincides with your son heading off to college. Work with faculty to secure grants and research funding. Carry on your scholarly work by editing books and journals. When your three-year term ends, leap at the opportunity to serve as interim dean at neighboring Scripps College—a chance to try something new without having to pack up and move.



**7** Receive the call from Pomona about applying for the dean's job here. Agonize a bit because you've become attached to both schools. Realize tightening budgets make your economics background and interest in resource allocation particularly useful for Pomona. Take the job. Get to work. Then get an added bonus as you learn your son is starting grad school this fall at M.I.T. His field of study: economics. —Mark Kendall

By the Numbers / O.A.

## Marshmallow Adventures

Student Program Director Susan Deitz has a stash. It's a strange one that grows each summer to include hundreds of Peeps, along with piles of backpacks and stacks of first-aid kits. She and Martin Crawford run Pomona's popular Orientation Adventure program, which sends first-year students on special trips ranging from backpacking in the Sierra to kayaking off the Channel Islands, all during the week before classes start. What's up with the Peeps? Somehow, over the years, the mutant marshmallow treats became an O.A. tradition, made easier to carry on since they became available year-round via the Web. See how many of those sugar-birds made the trip, along with other stats from this year's adventures:

- 600 Peeps brought along
- 406 First-years who went on OA
- 85 Trip leaders
- 504 Packets of oatmeal
- 32 First aid kits
- 26 Average miles hiked on backpacking trips
- 35 Average backpack weight in pounds



Athletics / Intramural Team Names

# Pink Bunnies Vs. Flaming Owls

Intramural sports, at their quirky, small-college core, are not about winning or losing. They are about coming up with a really cool name for your team. Something that smacks 'em in the face like an errant dodge ball: The Flaming Owls of Death, The Mad Scientists, The Pink Fluffy Bunnies.

"A good team name is original, often uses a play on words and should elicit at least a humorous smirk from those who hear the name," says Bjorn Commers '11, who has played intramural soccer, beach volleyball and softball.

Leave the bland, market-driven monikers for the big leagues. At Pomona, IM team names run from the saucy (Sets on the Beach for beach volleyball) to the cryptic (Yompalomp for beach volleyball). We will probably never know why one inner-tube water polo team calls itself The Naked Man.

Pro team names rarely reach beyond three syllables, but at Pomona, length seems no issue, not with tags like Oedipus and Elektra's Awkward Family Reunion or We Were Acceptable in the '80s, which riffs off a Calvin Harris song. Word play is plentiful and in-jokes abound. Surely there was deep thought or deep irony at work when teams labeled themselves the Senior Bank Managers or Syntax Error. By comparison, such labels as The Velociraptors and The Narwhals, daring for most venues, seem almost tame.

With so much at stake, the name game can be a team's first test. Joe LaBriola '12 tells of "long, protracted meetings" in which dorm teams debate



what to call themselves. "More effort goes into it than you'd think," says LaBriola, who has played IM sports ranging from basketball to inner-tube water polo. "People get very opinionated." But if over-thinking can be a danger

on the playing field, could it also be a hindrance in deciding what to label your crew? On this fall's roster, an inner-tube water polo team simply calls itself: Insert Clever Name Here. —Mark Kendall

## Sports Update / Spring 2009

### Baseball

(37-7 Overall, 19-3 SCIAC Championship) Breaking a school record with 19 SCIAC wins, the team won the conference championship. Drew Hedman '09, Zachary Mandelblatt '09, Nick Frederick '11, David Colvin PI '11, James Kang PI '10 and Brandon Huerta PI '09 were named to the all-SCIAC first team. Mike Silva (CGU) and Teddy Bingham '11 were named to the second team.

### Women's Tennis

(14-7 overall, 9-1 SCIAC Championship) The team won the SCIAC regular season title to earn the wildcard bid to the NCAA tournament. Siobhan Finicane '10 was named SCIAC Player of the Year for the third consecutive year. Becca

Lange '09 was named to the all-SCIAC first team. Olivia Muesse '10 and Nicole Holsted '12 were named to the second team. Defending NCAA singles champion Finicane was again selected to represent the team in the singles national tournament, where she was again named an NCAA singles all-American. Finicane and Muesse advanced to the doubles finals.

### Women's Water Polo

(22-9 overall, 7-2 SCIAC, National Champions) The team won the season-ending Collegiate III championship, defeating Redlands 10-5 in the finals. Sarah Woods '10 was named tournament MVP. Nikki Ruesch PI '09 was named to the all-tournament team, and Janelle Gyorffy '09 and Naneh Apkarian '10 were selected to the tournament honorable mention team. Gyorffy and Ruesch were named to the all-

Athletics / Baseball After Pomona

# IN A LEAGUE of His Own

Drew Hedman '09 racked up almost as many honors as home runs this spring. He was named to the all-SCIAC team and named SCIAC Player of the Year and anointed as Hitter of the Year by the National Collegiate Baseball Writers Association. And when the Sagehens' season was over, Hedman was selected by the Boston Red Sox in the 50th round of Major League Baseball's first-year draft. Hedman, who plays first base and outfield, started his minor-league career with the single-A Lowell (Mass.) Spinners in June.

### Looking back at his Sagehen baseball days:

Favorite moment was either my sophomore year when we won our league for the first time in a while or this year when we flew up to Oregon for regionals; really seeing the team come together was something I will never forget.



**Getting picked in the 50th and final round of the Major League Baseball draft:** Draft day was pretty stressful, really. I obviously had to wait until the 50th round. Everything I heard was for sure I would be taken on the second day, but that didn't happen. I had to wait until the third day. It was a stressful

process but I was happy to hear my name called and especially by a franchise like the Red Sox.

### Describing his first minor-league game:

It was great. Opening night, there were 5,000 people here. My first at-bat, I got hit in the ribs. I was jogging down to first thinking, "Wow, welcome to professional baseball, Drew." ... I remember coming into the clubhouse, seeing all the guys who played here who are in the majors, and realizing that you are now on the same path that they once were—just truly amazing to realize that.

**What he hopes to accomplish in baseball:** Just to get better every day as a player. I want people to say, "Hey, this guy was picked in the 50th round and he made it to the Show." —Interview by John Gray of the Lowell Spinners

SCIAC first team; Woods and Tamara Perea PI '11 were named to the second team.

### Men's Tennis

(9-15 overall, 5-5 conference) Cameron Taylor '09 was named to the all-SCIAC first team, while Nick Tagliarino PI '11 and Tommy Meyer '12 were named to the all-conference second team. The Sagehens finished the season with four players ranked in the west region in singles: Meyer (No. 9), Taylor (14), Tagliarino (23) and Uday Singh '12 (40). The team finished the season ranked No. 27 in the country for Division III.

### Softball

(11-27 overall, 8-16 conference) MacKenzie Smith '09 was named to the all-SCIAC second team at-large, and Arianna

Roach PI '12 was named as an all-SCIAC second-team shortstop. Smith threw three shutouts for the year, against La Verne, Whittier and CMS.

### Women's Track and Field

(6-1 dual meet record/ fourth place in SCIAC) Connie Cheng '09, Claire McGroder '10, Traci Lopez PI '12, Maddie Kieselhorst PI '09, Rose Haag '10, Micaela Fein PI '12 and Ellie Chestnut '10 were named to the all-SCIAC team. McGroder was SCIAC champion in the 400 meters.

### Men's Track and Field

(4-3 overall, 4-3 SCIAC) The team had three SCIAC champions: Anders Crabo '12, Colin Flynn PI '12 and Jack Lewis

'12. In addition to those stellar freshmen, Cameron Kinslow PI '11, Michael Grier '11 and Torrey Olson '09 were named to the all-SCIAC first team.

### Golf

(sixth place in SCIAC) The team finished the season ranked in the top 50 in the nation, and John Hasse '12 was named to the all-SCIAC first team.

### Women's Lacrosse

(4-13 overall) The team had impressive wins over Dallas, Oberlin, Birmingham Southern and Occidental. Martha Marich '12 was the leading scorer in the western region and the leading freshman scorer in Division III. Kayla McCulley '09 was the top defender in the western region.



Reaching Out / *The Draper Center*

# Community Partners

A range of outreach initiatives at Pomona College have been brought together under one roof this fall as part of a new center committed to building and strengthening partnerships between the College and the community, thanks to a significant gift from Ranney Draper '60, his wife, Priscilla Draper, and the Draper Family Foundation.

The Draper Center for Community Partnerships, dedicated in October, is the centerpiece of a new initiative to enhance student learning, faculty teaching and research at Pomona, as well as the quality of life in surrounding communities, through an integrated and collaborative program of community partnerships. The center will bring together numerous existing programs that connect Pomona College with local communities and create new ones.

Existing programs include the Pomona Academy for Youth Success (PAYS), a free summer college prep program for local high school students; Pomona Partners, in which college volunteers provide weekly after-school activities at nearby Fremont Middle School; Theatre for Young Audiences, a partnership between Fremont Middle School, Pomona College's Department of Theatre and Dance, and the Pomona Unified School District; and the College Bound Saturday School program, a math- and writing-intensive program helping area students prepare for college; as well as episodic volunteer opportunities. Each year these programs provide skills training and



Pomona students and faculty work with talented local students in the Pomona Academy for Youth Success (PAYS).



PHOTO BY CARRIE ROSEVA

tutoring for hundreds of local students.

Now in its 15th year, the Pomona Partners program sends college volunteers to tutor middle school students on a range of subjects. Volunteer coordinators also facilitate weekly sessions and activities, including campus visits and a mock majors fair.

"The level of interaction between the volunteers and the students, and the dedication put forth by the coordinators to plan out an activity each week definitely helped encourage my participation," says Bryan Coreas '11, who was a student volunteer coordinator during the 2008-09 school year. "I really had not expected such an enthusiastic group of kids. It seemed as if the volunteers gained energy from them and vice versa."

Now an active Pomona Partners volunteer, Coreas says he may not have even applied to Pomona College if not for another Draper educational outreach program, the Pomona Academy for Youth Success (PAYS) program. PAYS is an annual summer

program that provides guidance to college-bound high school students from Los Angeles County and the Inland Empire. Selected students are invited to Pomona for four weeks during



Priscilla and Ranney '60 Draper

PHOTO BY CARLOS PUMA

years before deciding to apply to Pomona.

"I always knew that I would go to college, but it was never really clear where or how to get there," Coreas says. "In a way, the program gave me more certainty in the steps I had taken, and in the steps that I would take as I continued on this path to college."

The Draper gift, the amount of which is not being released, will provide a significant endowment supporting the Center's operations as its staff works to cultivate a stronger culture of social responsibility and community engagement on campus. These efforts will be guided, in part, by a new advisory board made up of community leaders, faculty, staff, trustees and students.

"This generous gift ensures that we will be able to build on the successful programs we provide to children and teens in our area and will allow us to build new bridges to the community, providing our students with more opportunities to share their knowledge and build leadership skills," says Pomona College President David Oxtoby.

Ranney Draper, who has been a member of the Pomona College Board of Trustees since 1984, earned his bachelor's degree in history at Pomona in 1960. Since then, he has had a long career in California real estate. Residents of Orange County, Ranney and Priscilla Draper have for the past decade devoted a great deal of time and resources to supporting community-building educational programs in their own community and at Pomona, founding a number of the College's existing outreach initiatives and helping to sustain and build a dynamic program with their ongoing support.

"I believe great colleges like Pomona have a responsibility to be engaged in the wider community, to make a difference in the lives of the people who live there," Ranney Draper says. "I'm excited to be involved with this new center because that's exactly what it represents—the college and the community recommitting themselves to work as partners to improve people's lives." +

the summer to participate in a comprehensive academic curriculum that includes math and critical inquiry courses as well as a variety of electives.

Coreas was accepted into PAYS, known formerly as the Summer Scholars Enrichment Program, when he was a freshman at Bassett High School in the nearby city of La Puente. He participated in the program for three

Film Screening / *John Krasinski*

## Campus Visit Gets Star Out of *The Office*

Last fall at the Pomona College memorial service for Professor David Foster Wallace, a familiar face—for those who watch NBC Thursday evenings—showed up to share his thoughts. John Krasinski, who portrays nice-guy Jim Halpert on *The Office*, has been captivated by Wallace's transformative ideas and prose since his college days. He began writing the adaptation of Wallace's short story collection *Brief Interviews with Hideous Men* early in his career and just recently completed the journey to bring this "unfilmable" work to the big screen.

This September, Krasinski returned to campus to give a semi-secret L.A.-area premiere of the film, which he also directed and produced. English Department Chair Kevin Dettmar had hatched the idea for the screening in light of Krasinski's kind words at the memorial, and it came together after Professor Kathleen Fitzpatrick recently appeared with Krasinski at a Wallace-related event.

*Brief Interviews*, the book, is a series of short vignettes that delve into the psyches of several men, particularly in respect to their relationships with women. The film remains true to the original work with much of the dialogue unchanged, though Krasinski does add the character of Sara, a graduate student conducting the interviews, which helps to weave together a narrative of the disparate stories.

After the screening, Krasinski said he sees the movie as an "open door" to Wallace's books: "I hope more people get into his writing. If this is your gateway drug, take it and pick up as many books as you can."

During a Q&A session, he recalled the telephone conversation in which Wallace offered his blessing on the project. "It was not only incredible [to receive his blessing], it was essential to me," said Krasinski, who bought the rights to *Brief Interviews* with his paycheck from the pilot of *The Office*. "To know that you're on the path of something that you believe in so deeply and to know that the guy leading the way for you is telling you that you're doing the right thing is pretty mind-exploding." +

—Laura Tiffany



PHOTO BY CARRIE ROSEVA

John Krasinski

—Related story on page 48



Leadership / *The Changing of the Chairs*

# Looking Forward

Interview by Mary Marvin / Photos by Jeanine Hill

*Paul Efron '76 recently was elected chair of the Pomona College Board of Trustees, succeeding Stewart Smith '68, who held the post for nine years. Smith will chair the comprehensive fundraising campaign the College is scheduled to launch in fall 2010. The pair talked to PCM's Mary Marvin about issues facing the College.*

**PCM:** Paul, you've had a close association for many years with Pomona, as a student, parent, board member and chair. How would you describe where the College stands today?

**Efron:** This is not a static sort of endeavor. Pomona continues to grow and evolve. We're blessed with outstanding faculty and students, by our sun-drenched, very diverse, Asia-facing location, and by being part of The Claremont Colleges. I believe that we have an opportunity to provide what is widely regarded as the best liberal arts education in the country.

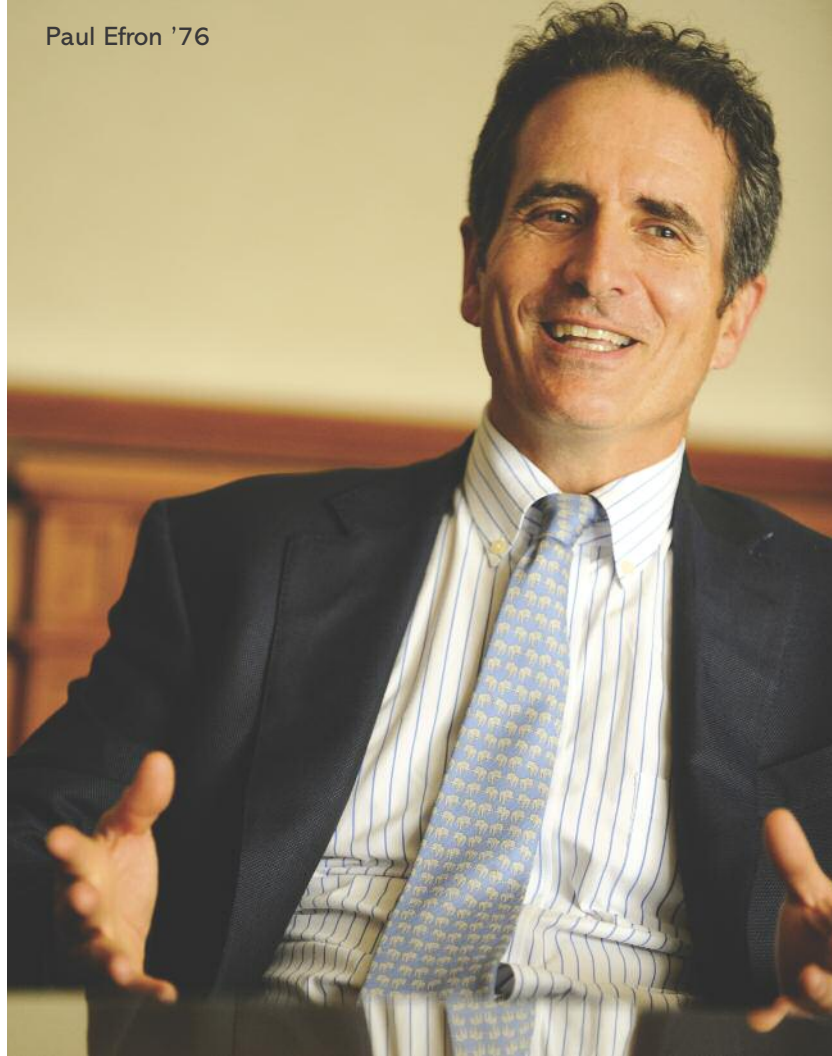
**PCM:** The economic downturn is on a lot of people's minds right now. What are some of the challenges facing Pomona?

**Smith:** The endowment is down substantially, and we can anticipate that it will be awhile before it approaches the \$1.9 billion we had at the end of the 2008 fiscal year. There have been some difficult adjustments that were necessary for the long-term well-being of the College. Our goals are to make sure that the budget is the right size relative to our resources and to grow our endowment over time, which we've been doing for decades. We're also going to have to revisit our investment policies to assure they're appropriate.

**Efron:** The reason we are focused on the budget right now is not because we have an immediate crisis, but because we recognize that the returns we've had over the last 10 years may not be there in the future, and that it's prudent to take action in advance so we don't get into problems down the road.

**PCM:** What about the long-term picture?

**Efron:** We have a strategic plan with important academic and financial goals that we're sticking to. Realistically, though, some



Paul Efron '76

of the longer-term plans may be delayed while we focus on more immediate priorities.

**Smith:** It's a matter of timing. Everything in the strategic plan is still a valid aspiration for the College. I have stepped down as board chair, but will be chairing the upcoming comprehensive campaign. I'm very aware of the difficulties we're taking on right now in this environment, but the needs expressed in the Strategic Plan are just as real as when the plan was approved and more so in many areas that are impacted by the budgetary issues. It's our job to bring those needs to the attention of the Pomona community to see how they can help.

**PCM:** What are your goals for the campaign, and why is it important to the College?

**Efron:** The campaign is a tremendously important initiative for Pomona College. Not only do we have pressing needs for long-standing programs such as financial aid, especially given the current economic environment, but also goals for other areas, most notably in the arts. We believe that we have to be constantly improving our programs if we are to remain a leading liberal arts college.

**Smith:** Campaigns at Pomona have always been about more than funding the needs of the moment. Since its founding, perhaps the College's most distinguishing characteristic has been an

exceptional capacity for continual self-renewal and regeneration, thanks to the willingness of many generations to do all that was necessary to push the College toward the very highest of aspirations. The upcoming campaign, which resulted from two years of strategic planning among trustees, faculty, alumni, students, staff and administrators, will seek financial support for initiatives directed at improving teaching and learning, accessibility for talented students from all walks of life, faculty scholarship, and broad and meaningful student experiences.

**PCM:** Sustainability has become an important issue, especially for the students. It was also the focus of the last faculty/trustee retreat. In light of the financial problems, is it still an important goal?

**Efron:** Notwithstanding the budgetary problems, I think it's an issue that we will continue to view as a very high priority. There is a dual aspect to sustainability at Pomona. The first is that it's incumbent for us, as an institution, to think about our own use of resources in the most efficient manner. It also is vital to the students and an important aspect to their learning experience to understand problems like greenhouse gas emissions and other environmental issues.

**Smith:** As with many issues, this is probably a case where we won't be able to move as quickly or as far in the near term as we

would like. But we have committees and task forces addressing this issue, and a president who puts it at the very highest of his priorities, so this is going to happen. It's just a question of how it will be financed.

**Efron:** It is inconceivable to me that we would build a building without thinking about how we would minimize the energy footprint. Even though there may be some up-front costs to doing that, we think it's the right thing to do.

**PCM:** The new residence halls are not only good examples of sustainability but also student involvement in the planning. Have students become more involved in the life of the College?

**Smith:** Over the last decade there has been an increase in terms of student input being sought by the administration and the Board of Trustees on things like new buildings. Part of the reason for that is, while a terrific project, the Smith Campus Center didn't get it entirely right the first time in terms of what students needed. We had to come back and replan and, in the process, we learned that it's going to be better, cheaper and quicker to get student input up front.

**Efron:** Another example is our annual student/trustee retreat where we cover a number of issues. It's very valuable for the trustees to get an opportunity to hear what students think about a number of important issues.

**Smith:** The meetings with students can be extremely informative when we go about making decisions. It isn't that we try to implement every student's suggestion; it's more nuanced than that. At our last retreat, it was pointed out that the college experience for students on full scholarship might be very much impacted by their limited financial means, and in ways that have nothing to do with their educations. It may be the cost of a club team or going to a movie on Saturday night. We've started to think about how we can do more to address that reality.

**Efron:** One of the benefits of the small size of Pomona is that the board does have these opportunities to interact with the students and the faculty. The faculty/trustee retreat, which is held every two to three years, is another tremendously valuable opportunity for trustees to hear about their concerns.

**Smith:** The board has tried over the years to create ways where it can stay in touch with the inner world of Pomona College. This is a working board and trustees are selected based to a large part on their willingness to be actively involved, which is what helps us stay close to the Pomona community. The overall objective is to provide an outstanding academic experience for every student. As board members, we focus on the strategic allocation of resources to make that happen, and we also seek to assure that the best governance processes and the most talented administrators are in place to oversee the day-to-day college activities. And then our role is to get out of the way. ❖



Stewart Smith '68



# The **BOOK** in the XBOX

BY ADAM ROGERS '92

AN A VIDEO GAME BE LITERATURE?  
GAMING GURU DON DAGLOW '74  
AND OTHERS ARE LOOKING BEYOND  
BLOWING STUFF UP TO EXPLORE  
NEW WAYS OF TELLING STORIES...

## The

*clack clack clack* sound, insistent and machine-like, stopped Don Daglow '74 cold. He'd just walked through the front doors of Mudd-Blaisdell dormitory, headed for his room. But he'd never heard a noise like this one, coming from a door he'd never noticed. So he did what any self-respecting English major with a playwriting concentration would do: He went to check it out.

That's how, on November 5, 1971, Daglow stepped into the headquarters of the newly founded Pomona College Computer Science Study Group, and the sound turned out to be coming from a typewriter-like teletype printer. It was one of two, tied into a Digital Equipment Corporation PDP-10—a mainframe computer housed at Pitzer, the only time-sharing computer at The Claremont Colleges.





Daglow doesn't remember which group member was staffing the desk that day, but he does remember the first thing he saw: games. "I think they showed me horseracing," he says. "But then they showed me Eliza." It was an early bit of software that pretended to be a therapist. "You look at Eliza as a playwriting major and you go, 'Oh my God,'" Daglow says. "I was absolutely hooked." Over the next few months, Daglow wrote the first computer baseball game, an improvement on Eliza and an enhanced early text game based on *Star Trek* (already a proto-geek touchstone).

Back then, mainframes were more the province of Boolean search algorithms and data analysis. So why think of the primitive terminals as a vehicle for storytelling? "When I walked in and looked at it, that was the first thing that came to mind," Daglow says. "It didn't have pictures. It was printing text, and I'm a writer."

Daglow went on to make a career in videogame design—today he has a venerable resume that includes a Technology & Engineering Emmy Award for *Neverwinter Nights*. And at every stage, Daglow's challenge was to combine what he knew about theatre into a medium better at executing bright colors and explosions.

Most games have a story, or at least what you might call a premise. Even chess is supposed to be a battle between two armies, each equipped with plentiful cannon-fodder infantry and more powerful elite troops. Typically, though, that veneer makes no difference to actual game play. As John Carmack, one of the founders of Id Software and a creator of the ultraviolent first-person shooter *Doom*, famously put it: "Story in a game is like a story in a porn movie. It's expected to be there, but it's not that important."

But in the past few years, with the advent of massively powerful, game-dedicated console systems—video games have changed from exercises in guiding bits of colored light at other bits of colored light into a fully realized vehicle for narrative. Forward-thinking artists are working out the grammar and boundaries of a new kind of storytelling, capable of conveying emotion, meaning and subtext. Today's game-makers are giving birth to a new form of narrative for anyone with the hardware to play along.

**THE XBOX 360 IS** Microsoft's top-of-the-line gaming console. It looks more like a desktop computer than a video game system from the old days, has a cooling fan that roars like a window box air conditioner, and it's attached to a foot-long power adaptor. The controllers—nobody calls them joysticks anymore—are about the size of a fresh pretzel. They're meant to be held in both hands, and have two triggers for each index finger, mushroom-shaped omnidirectional levers for the thumbs, a directional pad for the left thumb, four buttons for the right thumb and three more switches in between. They are daunting, is what I'm saying.

I tend to be what the industry calls a "casual gamer," which means I play quick puzzle games, the descendants of Tetris. (It also means I am old.) Today's marquee games aren't aimed at

gamers like me. *Halo*, *Gears of War* and other titles on the A-list are movie-like adventures designed to take dozens of hours to play from beginning to end, and to use every single button on that controller. They are supposed to be experiences, as life-changing as a great novel or as emotionally fulfilling as a blockbuster summer movie. At upwards of \$50 a pop, they'd better be.

Video games didn't start out that way. Well into the 1980s, when an Apple IIe with a monochrome monitor was the height of home technology, the most popular games were computer text adventures very much like the ones Daglow first started noodling with. For geeks of a certain age, the opening line of *Zork*—"You are standing in an open field west of a white house with a boarded front door"—has as much emotional resonance as "Call me Ishmael" or "A long time ago in a galaxy far, far away" (just to pull two classics at random).

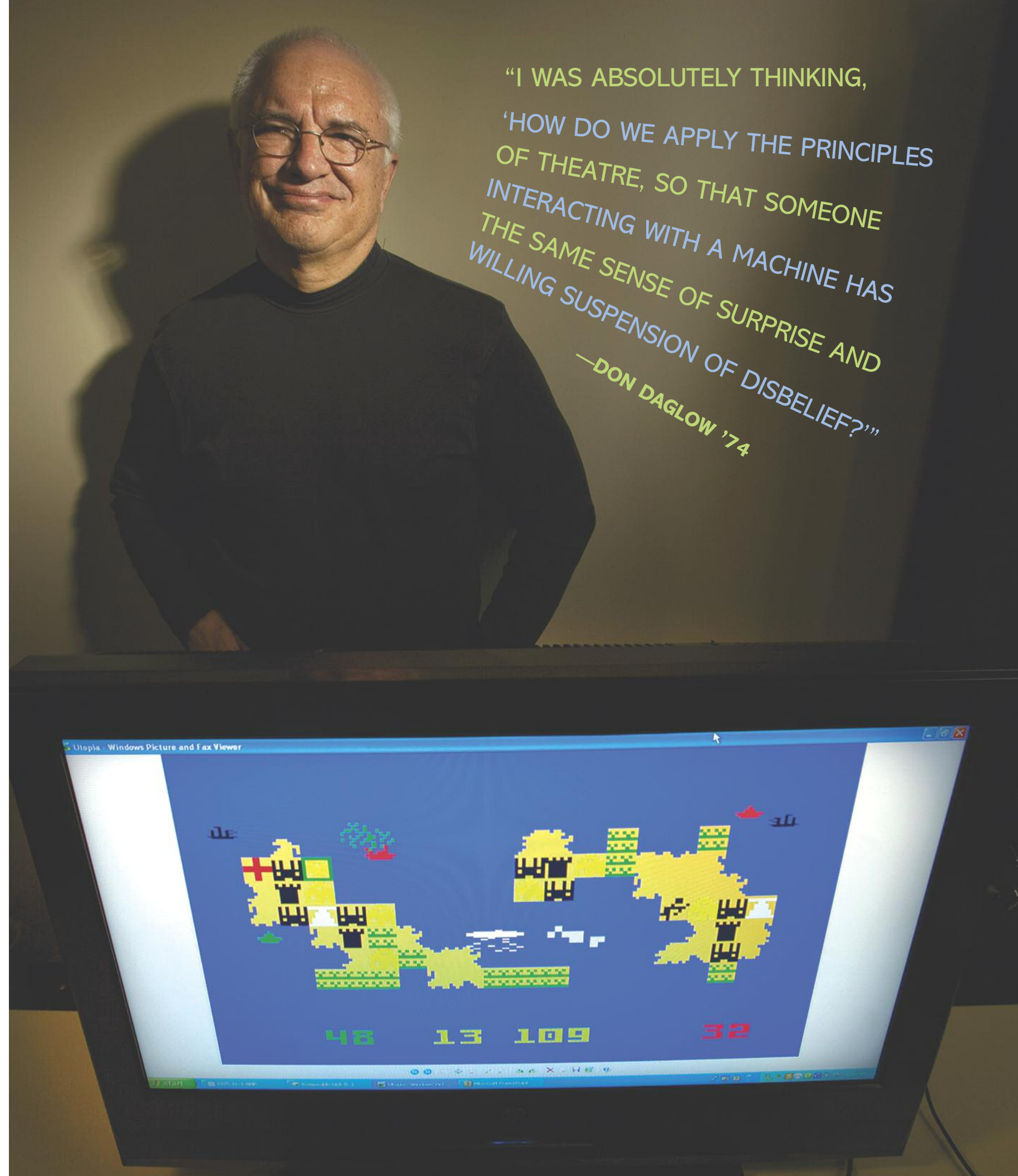
"They told stories in the traditional way, with words," says Ian Bogost, a games theorist at the Georgia Institute of Technology. In *Zork* and many of the text games that followed, the nominal object was to explore a world and gather treasure, but that wasn't the underlying game mechanic. "It was less about narrative and storytelling and more about puzzling and problem-solving," says Bogost.

**DAGLOW DELVED INTO** designing games professionally for Mattel's Intellivision console system during this time, and he was eager to break past storytelling limitations. At Mattel he designed the first game to use the concept of camera angles, a baseball title that mimicked TV broadcasts. "I was absolutely thinking, 'How do we apply the principles of theatre, so that someone interacting with a machine has the same sense of surprise and willing suspension of disbelief?'" he says.

Part of the answer came to him when he was working on the beloved multiplayer game *Neverwinter Nights* for AOL in 1989: He'd let the players do it for him. "We would treat the worlds as challenges that inspire stories, not as repositories of stories. We had to suggest characters rather than draw them."

Daglow had hit upon a property called "emergence." In any one of the various massively multiplayer online role playing games—MMORPGs—like *World of Warcraft*, or even the online world *Second Life*, people explore different identities and activities collaboratively with fellow players. More than 11.5 million people play *WoW*—a huge cast. Maybe that quantity of people interacting, combined with better graphics, really can create a self-weaving tapestry of story. Researchers have been arguing as much since multiplayer universes were little more than Dungeons and Dragons-based chat rooms.

Still, many of today's most popular games tend to have premises rather than stories. They're exquisitely-rendered automobile races, kung fu battles or gunfights that'll give you a rush of excitement and adrenaline followed by relief upon the achievement of an objective. Not that there's anything wrong with that. But some games—popular ones, to be sure—aspire to more. *Bioshock* makes a pass at commenting on the futility of Ayn Randian objectivism. *Far Cry 2* is full of political intrigue.





“We’ve spent the last 20 years making the colored bits look better,” says Bogost. “For the last five years, we’ve been in this crisis. How do we make meaningful games, games that do more than titillate adolescent fantasy? One answer is, we need better story.”

**THE NEWEST GAME** in the works at Pandemic, a Los Angeles-based game maker, is called *Saboteur*. It’s set during World War II, which is a cliché so tapped out that newer games generally make the Nazis into Nazi zombies, just to change things up. But Josh Resnick ’89, Pandemic’s CEO, promises this one will be different. “You have a personal revenge story,” he says. “We have found in our focus groups and testing that people really want to keep playing this game. They want to find out what happens to the character.”

At Pomona, Resnick studied international relations and business, and went on to get an MBA. But he’d been a gamer since high school, beneficiary of the world that Daglow helped create. So when Resnick got out of grad school he got himself hired at Activision, a heavy-hitter in the games world, and then spun off Pandemic, which, to be honest, is better known for action than narrative. One title, *Mercenaries*, was more “about the experience of being able to go anywhere, do anything and blow everything up,” Resnick says. That’s not a knock; it’s true for the bulk of the industry. You race a car, or kill vampires or play a sport. Sometimes you do it against the computer. Sometimes you do it with friends, or with strangers over the Internet.

But for *Saboteur*, the company wanted broader appeal. “We spent an enormous amount of money and resources and thought developing that character and coming up with a compelling story,” Resnick says. “In the past, you’d look at your team and kind of as an afterthought say, ‘We need some story beats. Which one of you designers has taken a writing class?’ Now people are hiring professional talent.”

Exactly what that talent is supposed to do is an open question. One compelling approach to games criticism says that this new medium differs so much from all the others—from books or theatre or movies—that it shouldn’t be thought of in terms of beginning-middle-end, narrator/audience models at all. Bogost’s book *Persuasive Games* is just one of dozens wrestling with this epistemology. As he points out, books and movies don’t abide by those strictures anymore. Why should games?

From that perspective, videogames are almost unavoidably postmodern. Sure, a protagonist faces increasingly consequential challenges leading to a climactic action—that’s very Aristotelian. But in videogames, the player is both protagonist *and* audience simultaneously. That should yield huge gobs of empathy, but in my experience it’s actually more distancing. It’s not *really me* in there, shooting giant steampunk robots in *Bioshock* or murdering Saracens in *Assassin’s Creed*. It’s, you know, just a game. But at least my life as a character has meaning—or something like it—in those titles. Vast “open sandbox” games like *Grand Theft Auto*, let the player just sort of wander

around, exploring. (People love this: In its first month, *GTA IV* sold 8.5 million copies.)

This is where things get tricky. In old-style media like books and movies, the interface is well-understood. You open the cover, you turn a page, you look at the words. Imagine how much harder it would have been to figure out *Chinatown* if you’d never seen video before. Now imagine trying to figure out that freakish controller for the first time, while simultaneously trying to work out how you feel about being a malaria-infected mercenary in Africa in *Far Cry 2*. Trust me: not easy.

Eventually the control interface will disappear altogether. Nintendo’s Wii console system is highly intuitive, dumping most of the buttons on its controllers for a sensitivity to acceleration and motion. And at the Electronic Entertainment Expo in Los Angeles last June, Microsoft unveiled a controller called Natal, essentially a camera that captures the motions of a player and transduces them into a game. In other words, there’s no controller at all. Just you.

The software itself will get smarter, too. Researchers at MIT are experimenting with artificially intelligent bots, characters within a game, that learn to behave the way their real world counterparts would. And a couple of tech-minded artists at UC Santa Cruz built their own “drama engine” that changes the story and dialogue depending on what the player does—and far from being a typical shoot-’em-up, their game *Façade* is about a marital spat.

What most people who think about videogames agree on is that their universe is still inchoate. It can take years—decades—for new art forms to find their true voices. The tools and techniques for conveying emotion and narrative in games are improving, and the possibilities engross Daglow, something of an industry guru these days. He developed games for every generation of console hardware, and for most of that time, he and his teams knew that nothing they created was going to look like real life. The best they could do was mimic the kind of camera moves you might see on TV. But the latest hardware has enough computational oomph to produce images of near cinematic perfection—which gives you the ability to make other elements, like character or conflict, more sophisticated. Daglow calls it, with only a little humility, Daglow’s Law: Storytelling expands first to fill the technological bandwidth of a medium, and then the emotional bandwidth. (You also have to have the cash. In 1988, his Stormfront Studios developed its first game for \$70,000. When the company folded in 2008, it was working on two games with a total budget of \$20 million.)

Obviously, 30 years has radically remade the videogame industry, but Daglow is back to designing a new game. The audience of players is hungrier, savvier and little by little they’ve been trained to expect more from their games than beautifully exploding zombie heads. “I’m trying to create a new genre,” Daglow says. “If it succeeds, people will view it as very different and innovative. And if we’re wrong, then we’ll be hearing crickets when we go live. But so be it. That’s the chance we take.” ✚

“IN THE PAST, YOU’D LOOK AT  
YOUR TEAM AND ... SAY, ‘WE  
NEED SOME STORY BEATS.  
WHICH ONE OF YOU DESIGNERS  
HAS TAKEN A WRITING CLASS?’  
NOW PEOPLE ARE HIRING  
PROFESSIONAL TALENT.”  
—JOSH RESNICK ’89







YOU CAUGHT ME IN THE MIDDLE OF SOMETHING.

VERY QUICKLY: I'M HECTOR, THE TOP PARKING VALET AT THE HIPPEST RESTAURANT IN L.A. THE FIN DU MONDE.



THE PARKING VALET GIG IS GOOD FOR ME. MY TIPS GO MOSTLY UNTAXED AND EVERY FIVE MINUTES, I'M DRIVING ANOTHER DREAM CAR. BUT YOU'RE RIGHT. THAT'S NOT ENOUGH TO KEEP A GUY AT MY AGE, WITH MY SKILLS, IN THIS JOB. THERE'S ANOTHER ANGLE.

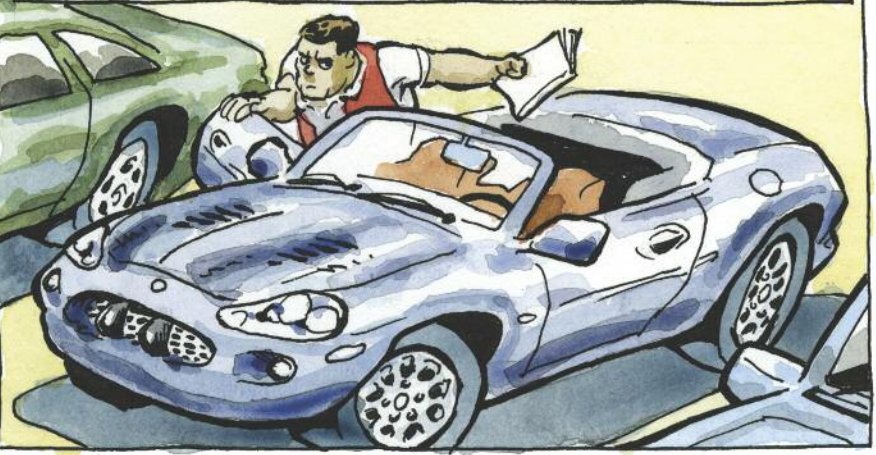
WE'RE TIGHT, RIGHT? YOU WON'T TALK?

I'M A SCRIPT TRAFFICKER.

THE SHORT VERSION IS IF YOU'RE A WRITER ON THE OUTSIDE, FOR A FEE I'LL GET YOUR SCRIPT IN FRONT OF THE EYES OF A PLAYER. I PUT YOUR SCREENPLAY ON THE PASSENGER SEAT OF A MEGAPRODUCER'S PORSCHE 911 GT2. HE THINKS HE DISCOVERED YOU AND YOU'RE OFF.



I JUMP YOU PAST SECRETARIES, SLUSHPILES, ASSISTANTS ... EVEN AGENTS.



THIS WORKS SO WELL THAT ONE OF THE BIGGEST DEALERS IN HOLLYWOOD IS OFF THE RADAR. ME. IT'S HOW I LIKE IT.



I TALK TOO MUCH. WHAT I WANTED WAS TO TELL YOU A STORY.

20 MINUTES AGO I GOT A CALL FROM A WOMAN AT THE AMBER GRIN, A HANGOUT FOR FILM SCRIBES. GOOD COFFEE. FREE WI-FI.



SAID SHE HAD A STORY TO MOVE. ONLY WHEN I GOT THERE ...

IT'S A GAG. THIS GUY PAID ME \$47 BUCKS TO CALL YOU DOWN HERE. YOUR FRIEND SAID YOU'D GET THE JOKE.



I KNOW. I DIDN'T GET IT EITHER.

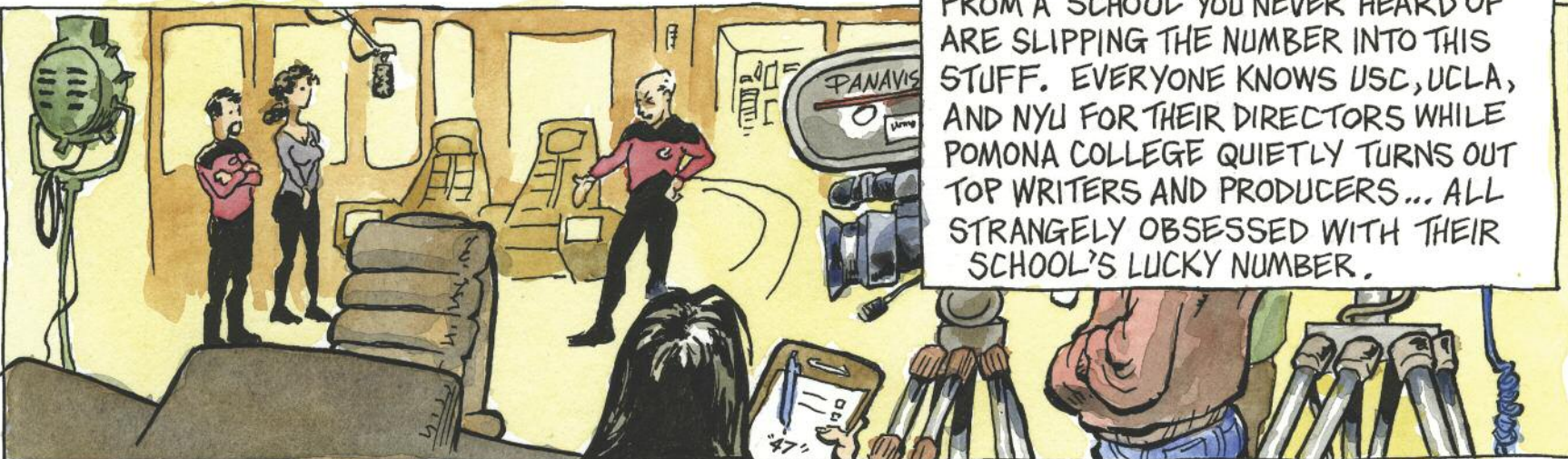


RANCE...





YOU MAY HAVE NOTICED SOMETHING LATELY, THE UNUSUAL FREQUENCY OF THE NUMBER '47' IN MOVIES AND TV SHOWS. IT'S NOT YOU.



A BUNCH OF HIGH-ACHIEVING NERDS FROM A SCHOOL YOU NEVER HEARD OF ARE SLIPPING THE NUMBER INTO THIS STUFF. EVERYONE KNOWS USC, UCLA, AND NYU FOR THEIR DIRECTORS WHILE POMONA COLLEGE QUIETLY TURNS OUT TOP WRITERS AND PRODUCERS... ALL STRANGELY OBSESSED WITH THEIR SCHOOL'S LUCKY NUMBER.

NONE OF THIS WOULD REGISTER WITH ME IF NOT FOR RANCE VELLUM. THERE'S ALWAYS ONE GUY WHO TAKES A THING TOO FAR. HE GOT WIND OF THE NUMBERS GAME AND WANTED IN. RANCE HAS PUSHED THE SAME BCAC\* FOR YEARS, EACH REWRITE RIFE WITH '47' REFERENCES. I REFUSE TO PLACE A BAD SCRIPT BUT HE WON'T GIVE UP.



\* BUDDY COP-ACTION COMEDY



MOST HACKS QUIT EVENTUALLY AND GET A LAW DEGREE OR MBA. NOT RANCE. AND THE 47 BUCKS? IT'S HIM. A RUSE TO GET ME AWAY FROM THE FIN. NICE TRY.

I ROAR INTO THE PARKING LOT AND SPOT HIM, VELLUM, SCRIPT IN HAND AND A SAD EXCUSE FOR A VALET DISGUISE.



IS THAT SUPPOSED TO BE ME? AND HE THINKS HE CAN PLACE HIS OWN SCRIPT?

HEY.







# WHAT'S This All About?

The mysterious No. 47, that great Sagehen secret, has Hollywood in its hold. From art films to sci-fi to Will Ferrell vehicles, Pomona's enduring in-joke has slipped past countless millions of movie-goers and tube-watchers in recent years. Fans tally the references online. On TV's *Lost*, 47 people survive the plane crash. In *The 40-Year-Old Virgin*, Steve Carell keeps a collection of 47 G.I. Joes. This summer's blockbuster reboot of *Star Trek* alludes to 47 Klingon vessels being destroyed.

There is even a much-viewed YouTube spoof of Jim Carrey's *The Number 23*, substituting—you guessed it—the No. 47.

The number-dropping started in the '90s in earlier incarnations of *Star Trek*. Joe Menosky '79 was a writer for *The Next Generation* (and later *Voyager* and *Deep Space Nine*) when he started slipping 47s into the shows. A producer eventually got wind and shut down the underground effort. But 47 keeps popping up in all sorts of shows.

If Menosky has moved on, how come our secret number keeps landing bit parts time and again? Is our 47 tradition at risk of overexposure? There's no getting a straight answer out of Tinseltown on this sort of stuff, so—in the playful spirit of this issue—we turned to graphic novel artist Andrew Mitchell '89 and his Hollywood insider-outsider, Hector Impala, for his creative take on the mystery.

## ABOUT the Artist



Much like his creation, Hector Impala, Andrew Mitchell '89 is a multi-tasker. He lives dual lives as writer-illustrator and stock broker in Orange County, Calif. Along with his *Hector Impala, P.V.* graphic novel, Mitchell has created cartoons and illustrations for children's books and video games. His own how-to art book for kids, *Draw 50 Magical Creatures*, will be published this fall by Random House. He is president of the Cartoonists of Orange County, and, once again like Hector Impala, he has a thing for classic cars.



WRITING BASEBALL CARDS FOR A LIVING SOUNDS LIKE A CHILDHOOD FANTASY, BUT FOR DAVID ROTH '00, THE WORK OF A CARDBOARD SCRIBE TURNED OUT TO BE MORE—AND LESS—THAN HE EVER EXPECTED...

# THE OTHER SIDE OF THE BASEBALL CARD

ESSAY BY DAVID ROTH '00 / PHOTO BY CASEY KELBAUGH

ONE HIGH-SKIED SUMMER DAY, unemployed and directionless several months after graduating from Pomona, I walked into the backyard of my parents' house in New Jersey with a baseball in my hand. I had loved the game growing up, although I didn't show any special aptitude for it. I was 13 years old the last time I threw a pitch in a baseball game. Still, in my discouraged state that afternoon, the prospect of discovering some well-concealed pitching talent didn't seem a notably longer shot than any other career option. At the edge of a flowerbed, about 60 feet out from a plastic-shelled shed, I went into an abbreviated wind-up and uncorked the first knuckleball I'd ever thrown.

Of course, my knuckleball didn't flutter. The shed made a hollow, pained sound; the ball dropped to the ground. Here was final confirmation that, whatever it might hold, my then-unimaginable future would not involve me appearing on a baseball card. It turns out, though, that I was wrong about that. I've spent roughly half my working life in what I call—when I'm trying to impress people at parties—"the baseball card business."

Even by the low standards of the mid-1980s, the trading cards that sat in leaning towers all over my childhood bedroom were ugly things. Vaguely out-of-focus photos caught up-the-nose angles of mustachioed shortstops; permed relief pitchers squinted sourly into the lens wearing surly "don't touch my truck" facial expressions. The card backs were nearly as unattractive—filled with dense stats in tiny type and maybe a factoid of the "Mark enjoys sleeping and hunting" variety. And I loved them—the small but reliable excitement of tearing open a pack provided an adolescent-scale adrenaline rush, and as a devout and dorky sports fan, I treasured even the goofiest bit of pseudo-data. Still, I dropped my all-consuming card collecting habit, in that callous way teenagers do, upon entering high school.

I didn't really think about the cards for another 12 years, until I applied—on another underemployed afternoon—for a job at Topps, the card manufacturer to which I had been so loyal roughly half my life earlier. I felt more qualified for the Topps gig than I ever had before and more than I likely ever will until a job is invented in which the central duties are eating sandwiches and napping. I had accumulated those thousands of (largely worthless) Topps baseball cards, after all, as well as a comparable number of (similarly worthless) prior writing and editing credits. And there was also my brain, which was awash in useless sports flotsam. I interviewed, got the job, and spent two years at Topps' headquarters in lower Manhattan, editing and sometimes writing, the backs of trading cards.

As a kid, I'd imagined the Topps offices as a 10-year-old's fantasy land: baseball players milling about in full uniform, cards

everywhere for the taking and plenty of free gum. The Topps office was not like that—in its harsh fluorescent lights and dim cubicles and coffee-breathed grouching and thousand little power struggles, it was like any other office. The long-timers assured me that it was better than Topps' previous HQ. My childhood wonderland, it turned out, had actually been a dank, drafty old building under the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway.

I was laid off, eventually, but caught on right away as a freelance card-writer for Bruce Herman, Topps' head writer. I've been writing cards ever since. Each card is short—I seldom write even 75 words—but admirably open-ended. Not so open-ended that everything sails through—the card I wrote for Nuggets forward Renaldo Balkman that began with the words "A screaming comes across the sky" was edited, cruelly—but open-ended enough to keep me interested. I'm fortunate that silly sports arcana amuse me as much as they do. I'm not really adding anything to the discourse by noting that former Rockies pitcher Mike Esposito's dad performed the theme to *The Karate Kid* or by revealing Portland Trail Blazers 7-footer Greg Oden's childhood dream of becoming a dentist. But I like to imagine that an 11-year-old version of myself might appreciate that info.

Given Topps' current baroque phase, in which "historical" products hit shelves alongside the old standbys, the assignments are increasingly unpredictable. Over the last year I've written the expected baseball and basketball cards, but I've also written cards—that is, trading cards that one would theoretically trade—for Helen Keller and Paul Revere and Barack Obama and seemingly all of our nation's lesser, also-ran astronauts. It is, weirdly, almost a living. Mostly it's just weird.

But it has, finally, provided something like the experience I'd originally hoped for at Topps. For me, the fun of cards was always less in the accumulation than in the thrill of opening packs and discovering what's inside—possibly something good, possibly not, maybe one of the ultra-scarce "chase cards" that Topps and its competitors increasingly deploy to motivate a notably more bottom line-oriented consumer base than the one of which I was a member two decades ago. My Topps assignments comprise just a smallish part of my cobbled-together freelance income, but in their oddball randomness—from one assignment to the next, I could find myself writing cards for either Albert Pujols or Abraham Lincoln, Magic Johnson or Lyndon Johnson—the job offers an experience as close to that old pack-ripping thrill as I've come in my working life. Sure, I wish my editors would cool it with the "Heroes of Spaceflight" cards sometimes, but I still feel lucky that—in defiance of genetics and despite that flutter-free knuckleball—I somehow made it onto a trading card after all. ♦



# The Curator of

Professor Mark Allen's Machine Project just may be L.A.'s quirkiest communal art space.



STORY BY AGUSTIN GURZA / PHOTOS BY JEANINE HILL

## The midnight gathering

at Mark Allen's little storefront gallery has the air of a clandestine ritual. Billed simply as a "farewell to analog tv," the event is meant to ceremonially mark this night of June 12, when broadcast television stations switch to digital signals. Yes, the public is invited and the proceedings are visible to passersby on busy Alvarado Street in L.A.'s Echo Park neighborhood. But only those present seem to grasp the portent of the impending switch.

Three dozen true believers stand before a glowing totem of television sets piled high on the floor in front of them, tuned to different channels, mostly in black and white. It is a monument to the doomed medium, a tower of tubes that has survived the junkyard of time, and includes a white model from JC Penney, a beat-up Samsung and a space-age JVC Videosphere emitting a hazy image inside a red plastic globe, not unlike the picture inside the Wicked Witch's crystal ball from *The Wizard of Oz*.

After a fittingly quirky lecture on television and

its 19th century mechanical predecessor, the moment of The Big Switch approaches. People huddle closer to the mound of monitors, staring at the hypnotic collage of basketball highlights, Mexican soccer, celebrity gossip, an episode of *Everybody Loves Raymond* and a spot by the ubiquitous, bearded pitchman Billy Mays, who was to die two weeks later. Shortly before midnight, the screens flicker and turn to snow, like the old days when tubes went inexplicably on the blink. But instead of banging on the sets to get an image back, the audience erupts in cheer.

"Unbelievable, man," mutters one viewer, hippie-like.

"It's over," announces Allen, a big smile on his face.

And so ends a quintessential Machine Project event, featuring elements near and dear to the gallery's founder and visionary-in-chief who, in his professor role, teaches digital arts at Pomona College. There is the atmosphere of a happening. The pop-culture enthusiasm for science and





technology. The intimacy of a small group creating a shared experience. The immediacy of a live performance. The obsession with a moment in time, thrilling if you were there, gone forever if you missed it.

Plus, it's a great excuse for a party.

Allen's Machine Project is a showcase for the unexpected, impractical, seemingly pointless, patently absurd and wildly experimental. It is part gallery, part workshop, part laboratory, part theatre, part game room and part community classroom. It also has the potential of being part bookstore, with tall, column-like book shelves installed in the basement ready to be lifted on pulleys through portals in the floor to ground level (as soon as Allen is satisfied with the lifting mechanism).

Founded in 2003 and funded on a shoestring, the nonprofit gallery has emerged as one of the leading alternative art spaces in Southern California. And with it, Allen has risen to prominence in the local art scene.

Shortly after the TV event, L.A.'s Hammer Museum announced that Allen had been commissioned as guest artist for a one-year term as part of an ongoing drive to create a more engaging, artist-driven experience for visitors to the Westwood facility. And last November, Allen drew national attention when he and his merry crew, now a collective of some three dozen artists, invaded LACMA for a one-day event called "A Machine Project's Field Guide to the Los Angeles County Museum of Art." The crazy quilt of installations, performances and workshops, including an hourly death metal guitar performance, ruffled some stuffy curatorial feathers but ultimately won the day by more than tripling the museum's normal daily attendance to about 6,000.

"It was magical," says Charlotte Cotton, the county museum's photography curator who commissioned the Machine Project event. "And it changed those 6,000 people's relationship with LACMA on really profound levels.... That's what it could feel like if your traditional city museum was your town square."

**SMACK DAB AT THE CENTER** of that square is Allen, still boyishly handsome at 39, with a slight frame, narrow shoulders and fine features. His habit of raising his voice at the end of phrases with an interrogatory tone, adds to his youthful aura. But when he's in his element, mingling with his audience after an event, Allen exudes a confidence that makes him seem larger and taller than he is. Hands in his pockets, he greets his guests and smiles, always listening for the next new idea.

Allen is more cheerleader than curator, more trend illuminator than trend-setter. He sees himself as a medium for a movement that has bubbled up from the culture on its own. It's an arts movement that values relationships over objects to be collected and catalogued, social interaction over solitary contemplation, audience participation over curatorial dictates, and the trial-and-error of artistic experimentation over the dogma of experts.

If Allen is getting more attention from museums and the media, he says it's simply because he's shining a spotlight on what's already happening, a sort of Ed Sullivan of the alternative

art world, to borrow an analogy from the era of analog TV.

"Any time something [like Machine] gets more attention, it's because it's reflecting what the culture is doing," Allen explains. "The needs of the culture kind of drive the creation of these things as much as these things drive the culture. So if I didn't show up and start doing these things, somebody else would have in response to the kinds of needs or interests people have."

On some days, his guests are making communal jam with their own fruit or sampling homemade corn whiskey from a still made out of household plumbing supplies. On others, they are volunteering to be buried alive just to see what it feels like. They've heard lectures on the mating habits of sea slugs, participated in a speech-recognition sing-along and watched a psychedelic light show at midnight on the Fourth of July. This spring, they spent a month romping through a forest created inside the

gallery, with a moonlight poetry reading, a Bigfoot lecture and a double feature of vampire movies.

Allen is likely to find a few of his former Pomona students in the audience these days. Their presence is a sign that he's fulfilling an unofficial mission as a professor. On campus, he sees himself as a bridge between his students and the L.A. scene, which "sometimes I think feels very far away for them."

Taking her first digital arts class with Allen this fall, Nicola Parisi '12 enjoyed it when he showed the students a presentation of Machine Project exhibitions. His work in L.A. "makes him seem more like a person and not just a professor," Parisi says.

Allen brings spark to the classroom. "He definitely knows how to communicate and captivate an audience," she says. "He has the energy of a 5-year-old and not in a bad way, a good way—he's very expressive."



**ALLEN, THE SON OF SCIENTISTS**, can talk for hours, explaining his work with a pedagogic patience. On a recent morning, he sat for an interview at the cozy coffeehouse next door to Machine, though he brought his own juice and avoided the java. He seems taken aback by one comment: Considering the wacky and wild goings-on at his gallery, he must have been a mischievous kid, the kind with that dangerous mix of imagination, resourcefulness and guts.

"Oh, I wouldn't say I was particularly mischievous," he says. "I was a pretty quiet kid. Read a lot of books."

But Dad begs to differ.

"Oh, what a crock," huffs retired chemistry professor Christopher W. Allen when informed of his son's self assessment, an affectionate rebuke sounding like two old army buddies disputing recollections.

Yes, he was shy as a young child growing up in Essex, Vt., a small and sheltered college town near the University of Vermont, where his parents worked. But it wasn't long before he was the ringleader of a troop of friends who played Dungeons and Dragons in the Allen family basement. He always had an interest in nature and pestered his father to preserve creatures he caught—fish, frogs, salamanders—in formaldehyde.

"The things from childhood that have carried over and that you see in the gallery is that he's just interested in a huge variety of things," says the elder Allen. "He was curious about everything, and he was not afraid to try new things and go into totally new enterprises."

Almost to prove the point, Allen twice has invited his father to give talks at Machine, one on how molecules move electrons and another on the nature of polymer materials, titled Polyester: You Wear It, You Love It, But Do You Know It? Without any other reference to kinship, he called the lecture: "The first in our Machine Project visiting parent/scholar series."

His mother's interest in homemade crafts (she recently learned how to dye yarn) has also carried over to Machine, which has offered workshops on sewing and soldering. Elizabeth Allen, a retired geneticist, recalls that her son's artistic streak emerged in high school. The teen took to painting his skateboards and sneakers, then took the initiative to mount his first art show at a local youth center. He'd make things out of cardboard and Masonite, using bones, sticks, blocks and old parts of cameras. He melted wax on a hot plate in the cellar and turned old dresser drawers into "little constructs with fish and moons and things," painting the sides of the drawers and mounting wooden cut-out figures on the bottom. Mrs. Allen still keeps one of these drawer dioramas to store her knitting paraphernalia, noting that "for some strange reason, it has part of a telephone."

"Oh, that's in case the fish need to make a phone call," her son explains, dryly.

**AS MUCH AS ALLEN'S** home environment nurtured his creativity and curiosity, it would take time and several changes of scenery to inspire his artistic vision. Allen earned his



undergraduate arts degree from Skidmore College in Saratoga Springs, another small town in upstate New York. The training in painting, drawing, print-making was traditional—a skill-set that would become superfluous to his practice. Machine has exhibited paintings only once, and they weren't his.

Allen began to find his artistic path in 1993 with his move to Houston, an urban, multi-cultural Texas town about as close to the Mexican border as his hometown was to Canada. In terms of social ecology, it was as far from snowy Vermont as gritty Echo Park is from, well, Claremont.

With his freshly minted magna cum laude degree, he arrived for a fellowship with Core, the influential arts program of the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. He soon met other artists who helped him bust out of his conventional college framework and set him on the unpredictable, experimental track that would define his career.

Two of those associates, Sean Thorton and Chris Ballou of Arena Productions, organized one show in the back of a moving van which they drove around the city's five wards, allowing residents to trade their own art for anything on the truck. Two others, Jeff Elrod and Mark Flood of Art of This Century, founded their gallery in a faux-wood-paneled storefront that used to be a driving school, sleeping in the back and doing shows in the front.

"Previous to that, I had really thought of art as something that took place in commercial art galleries," recalls Allen. "So meeting them was kind of influential with my early thinking about the sites in which cultural practice takes place. That was interesting to me, that you could sort of transform any space into an art space by putting art in it."

"Interesting" is one of Allen's favorite words. He uses it liberally to describe people, places or things that pique his curiosity, or that don't.

**INTERESTING:** Video games. Anybody who can explain how things work. Carnivorous plants, like those he's cultivating in a hot house in Machine's basement.

**NOT INTERESTING:** Traditional schooling. The copies of *Dwell* magazine he receives as a gift subscription. The duties of fundraising for his gallery.

"Really interesting" was the unexpected revelation he had after the first show he curated in Houston, in which artists were invited to decorate refrigerators, acquired at Sears. It led to an exhibition that was part art show, part swap meet.

"Half the people who came to the opening were people who came to see the show, and half were just shopping for a refrigerator," he recalls. "It was like these two completely unrelated activities happening simultaneously in the same space. And I think about that a lot. Like, how do you involve different audiences who may have different needs and interests?"

**THAT CONCERN NOW** nags him more than ever at Machine, a hip hangout in working-class Echo Park. When he moved in five years ago, the largely Latino neighborhood was in the grips of gentrification, led by artists, musicians and film people. But Allen admits that the gallery has failed to attract native neighborhood residents in great numbers, especially Latinos.

"The narrative of independent art spaces is always connected to gentrification, and there's a lot of anxieties about those things," he says. "I don't think that we do as good a job reaching all the different kinds of communities as we could. I try to be welcoming, but sometimes I'm not successful."

Allen moved to this location precisely because he wanted to be part of a community, accessible to the general public. He wanted to surface, so to speak, from his days with an underground (literally) arts collective called C-level, which included fellow graduates from CalArts where he had earned an M.F.A. in 1999. The group's subterranean Chinatown hangout was as hidden as a speakeasy, up side streets and down alleyways, so only those in-the-know could feasibly find it.

For Machine, he wanted a location that was "more permeable to the outside world, where people could just wander in and just check stuff out." Echo Park filled the bill.

"It's a fairly pedestrian-y, neighborhood-y part of the city, and it's central in a certain kind of way," says Allen, who constantly, compulsively qualifies his statements. "It's almost an intersection, to a certain degree."

Allen often walks the 20 minutes from his small Silver Lake apartment where he lives with his girlfriend, artist Emily Joyce. He is at the gallery by 10 a.m. one recent morning, following a recreational day at Disneyland (his first) with Machine staff. He is fighting a cold and looks tired, the faint rings under his eyes betraying the fact that "my creative energy is spread very thin."

In the corner of the empty gallery, a forlorn platter of left-over hors d'oeuvres is still out, remnants of the prior weekend's event. The show, created by Brody Condon, was a dramatic reenactment of people who filmed themselves freaking out on drugs and posted their hallucinatory rantings on YouTube. Lighting for the two-person play (one actor stands still and speaks while the other mimes the psychotropic action) consisted of Home Depot-style work lamps strung in a row across the gallery ceiling. During breaks, people stood in the entryway where a suspended bucket protected them from water dripping from an air conditioning unit overhead.

"Yeah, we're not very slick," Allen admits, rolling his eyes. "I've been here for 10 years and it's still like, 10 minutes before the show nothing's working and something's plugged in some disastrous way. I don't know, it never seems to go anywhere."

Yet, there's a method to Machine's carefree informality, what Allen calls "showing the seams" as opposed to staging a spectacle. He wants the gallery to serve as a model for students and aspiring artists. So he makes it look easy: You just get a space, chill some beer and invite your friends to do shows.

"Being a good teacher is really about allowing people to see what's really exciting about something in the world," he says. "And so, when I teach my students, I'm just trying to convey to them an enthusiasm or a deeper appreciation for something. And I think that's very much my role at the gallery. Like, I'm just trying to convey to people who come, 'Here's someone I'm really excited about who I think is really important or interesting. And I think you're really going to love it too.'" ❖

INDISPENSABLE

PLAYTHINGS

BY GLENN WHIPP

There are

some playthings we never truly outgrow. Join us for Show-and-Tell as Sagehens share the childhood toys and games they couldn't bear to let go of...

BLUE BUNNY

Sharon Ostermann '06

Both ears fell off long ago.

But for Sharon Ostermann '06, looks aren't everything when it comes to her beloved childhood stuffed animal, Blue Bunny.

That has always been the case, too, since the bunny suffered most of its indignities in its early days as Ostermann's travel companion. On one family trip to South Carolina, she realized, 30 minutes on their way home to New York, that she left Blue Bunny behind at the motel. While she cried hysterically, her parents found a pay

phone: "My mother was worried because, even then, he looked pretty bad. She figured the motel staff would think we intentionally left him behind."

Blue Bunny was rescued, and somehow held itself together well enough to accompany Ostermann years later when she attended Pomona. Now the well-worn toy has another trip ahead as

Ostermann begins veterinary school at UC Davis. "I guess animals really are the most important thing in my life," says Ostermann.

PHOTO BY JEANINE HILL



# THE MONOPOLIST

Michael George '94



**W**hen Michael George '94 came to Pomona College as a freshman, he brought his fledgling collection of Monopoly games to Wig Hall. Today, with more than 100 versions in his possession, George's hobby has mushroomed to the point where housing them in a dorm room wouldn't be an option.

"They take up a whole wall in my basement," says George, who lives in Washington, D.C., where he does budgetary work for the government. "They're like my babies."

George began collecting Monopoly following a high school summer spent playing the board game with friends. One pal had returned from Europe with British, French and Italian Monopoly editions and the group began playing those games together, jumping from one board to the next, setting up

exchange rates between the various Monopoly currencies.

While studying abroad during his junior year at Pomona, George began collecting in earnest, though he limits himself to versions featuring properties with specific street and city names. (That rules out the movie and TV show editions.)

And he's still on the prowl. George and his partner went on a safari in Tanzania this summer. Along with his camera and sunscreen, he brought along a picture of a bygone Tanzanian edition of Monopoly. No one had ever seen it. Then, on a lay-over in Nairobi, George went prowling through the duty-free store and, on a lower shelf under some books, he found a Kenyan version of Monopoly.

"That's usually the way it works," George says. "Just when you give up, it comes out of nowhere. It's serendipity."

# SAY IT AGAIN, SAM

Samantha Brenner '02

**L**ong before high-tech games became part of almost every child's "education," Samantha Brenner '02 was hiding under the covers at night, playing the game "Say It" on her old-school, tomato-red, Texas Instruments-brand Speak & Spell.

"I'd be playing with it for hours," Brenner says. "Thinking back, my parents were very understanding because I don't remember being too concerned about being caught. That game was pretty loud!"

This was right around the time that E.T. (and Steven Spielberg) worked some magic on his friend Elliott's Speak & Spell so he could phone home. Brenner doesn't remember making any special modifications on her toy, which was the first consumer product to sport a single-chip speech synthesizer. Mostly, she just used it to learn to form words, play Hangman and while away the hours as the only child—older siblings had moved out—in her family's New York City apartment.

"It definitely signaled my love of reading and writing at an early age," says Brenner, a politics major now working as an independent consultant with nonprofits in New York.

Brenner recently rediscovered her Speak & Spell when her parents asked her to sort through her belongings in their storage locker. It still lights up and emits a few beeps. But the buttons don't work and the letters are garbled when they appear on screen.

"I have no idea what to do with it, but there's no way I can let it go," Brenner says. "Maybe somebody can point me to an electronics repair shop. I'd love to hear 'Say It' again."





# DOWN HOME HOOPS

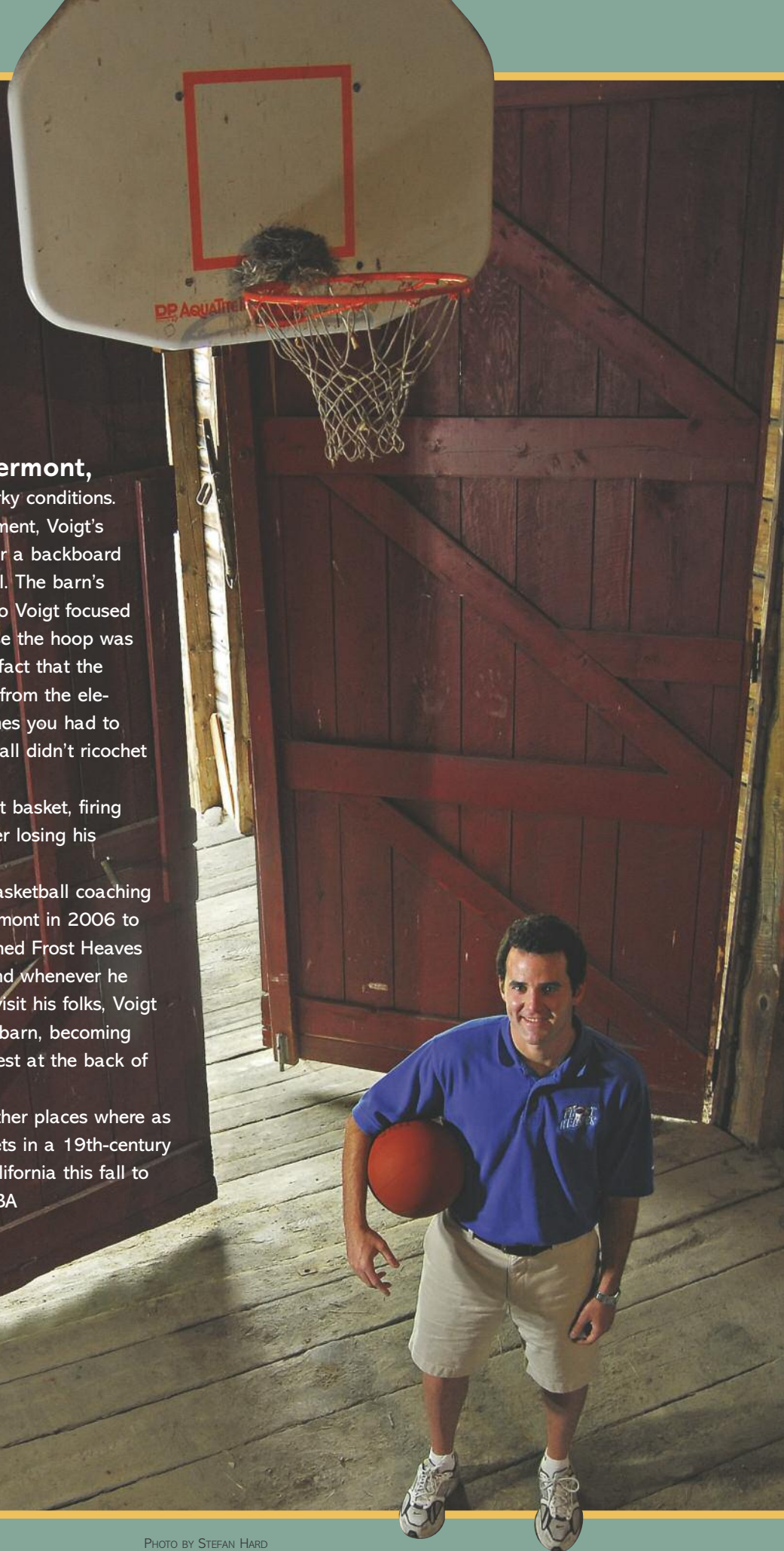
Will Voigt '98

**G**rowing up in small-town Vermont, Will Voigt '98 shot hoops at home under quirky conditions. In a setting long on snow and short on pavement, Voigt's dad chose a century-old barn as the place for a backboard after the boy showed an interest in basketball. The barn's uneven floorboards made dribbling difficult, so Voigt focused on his shot, which required extra arch because the hoop was hung four inches higher than regulation. The fact that the barn was used to shelter neighbors' vehicles from the elements only added to the challenge. "Sometimes you had to make some leaping saves to make sure the ball didn't ricochet off the rim to hit a car," says Voigt.

But Voigt spent countless hours under that basket, firing off free-throws with freezing-cold hands, never losing his interest in the game.

Post-Pomona, Voigt worked a series of basketball coaching jobs from Texas to Norway and back to Vermont in 2006 to become the first coach for the newly launched Frost Heaves in the American Basketball Association. And whenever he went home to the tiny town of Cabot to visit his folks, Voigt found that old hoop was still up in their barn, becoming such a fixture that a bird had built its nest at the back of the rim.

"There are probably not a lot of other places where as a kid you would learn to shoot baskets in a 19th-century barn," says Voigt, who moved to California this fall to coach the Bakersfield Jam in the NBA Development League.



ALISON ROSE JEFFERSON '80 IS TRYING TO PRESERVE THE MEMORY OF L.A.'S SEGREGATED BEACHES, AND OF ONE BEACH IN PARTICULAR...

# A PLACE IN THE SUN

BY MARK KENDALL

In California's fabled coast, Alison Rose Jefferson '80 fights the erosion of memory, working to preserve a beach story that doesn't fit the sunny Jan-and-Dean mythology.

She is not the first historian to encounter the saga behind a once-segregated section of Santa Monica State Beach. But Jefferson has dug the deepest to bring out the history of a stretch of sand that for decades was one of the few L.A.-area beaches where Black people could gather with little risk of trouble.

Under the *de facto* segregation that ruled in this region from the 1920s to the 1950s, even a day at the beach required a degree of caution and calculation if you were Black. Choose the wrong spot and you risked humiliation at best. "People are pretty much struck by the fact that they just don't know this history," says Jefferson. Except for the people who lived through it, who Jefferson says are apt to reply: "We knew about this history; *you* just didn't know about this history."

The important thing to Jefferson is that you learn about it now. Though she starts her conversation in the safe realm of dates, places and family names—all delivered with speed and enthusiasm that only a historian could muster—it doesn't take much prodding to bring out the deeper motivation behind her work. "I'm coming at this because I'm interested





in it and I'm passionate about it," says Jefferson, who began a doctoral program in history at UC Santa Barbara in September. "Why would I do this if I was not passionate about it? There are easier ways to make a living."

She handles this story as she would an old-timer's fraying family photo album, something she has practice with from gathering tales for her research. The reality of societal discrimination can't blot out the countless fond personal memories of a gathering spot where the region's Black community found a place in the sun. "The pain was they couldn't go everywhere that they wanted to go," says Jefferson. "But people endure. They were going to come and enjoy what California had to offer—just as everybody else would come and enjoy."

**THE PROMISED SAND** was for everyone—at least that was the hope—as migrants poured into coastal Southern California at the dawn of the 20th century. In seaside Santa Monica, a small African-American community of a couple hundred people took root, building homes and starting businesses. In no time, as if to make it all official, came the arrival of a Black Christian Methodist Episcopal church from the South, Phillips Chapel, which offered the Sunday twofer of attending services, then hitting the beach. Jefferson says that likely added to Santa Monica's attraction for African-Americans in nearby cities, as did the opening of Black-owned nightclubs and easy access to the beach town via streetcars from Los Angeles.

By the early 1920s, a group of Black investors, led by Charles Darden and Norman Houston, were planning an attraction that would give visitors much more to do once they reached the shore. Their plans called for an amusement site on land they were buying along the beach. But racial attitudes in the region were changing for the worse. Newspaper articles about the project took on overtly racist tones, the homeowners of the segregationist Santa Monica Bay Protective League rose up in protest and the city turned down the project, as Jefferson has painstakingly documented, most recently in this summer's issue of the *Southern California Quarterly*. The sale of the property to the investors was quickly rescinded. "At that point, they were disenfranchised from their business venture," says Jefferson. In the aftermath, posh, white-owned beach clubs began to rise along the shore, and the Black section of beach was pushed south to a spot between Bay and Bicknell streets.

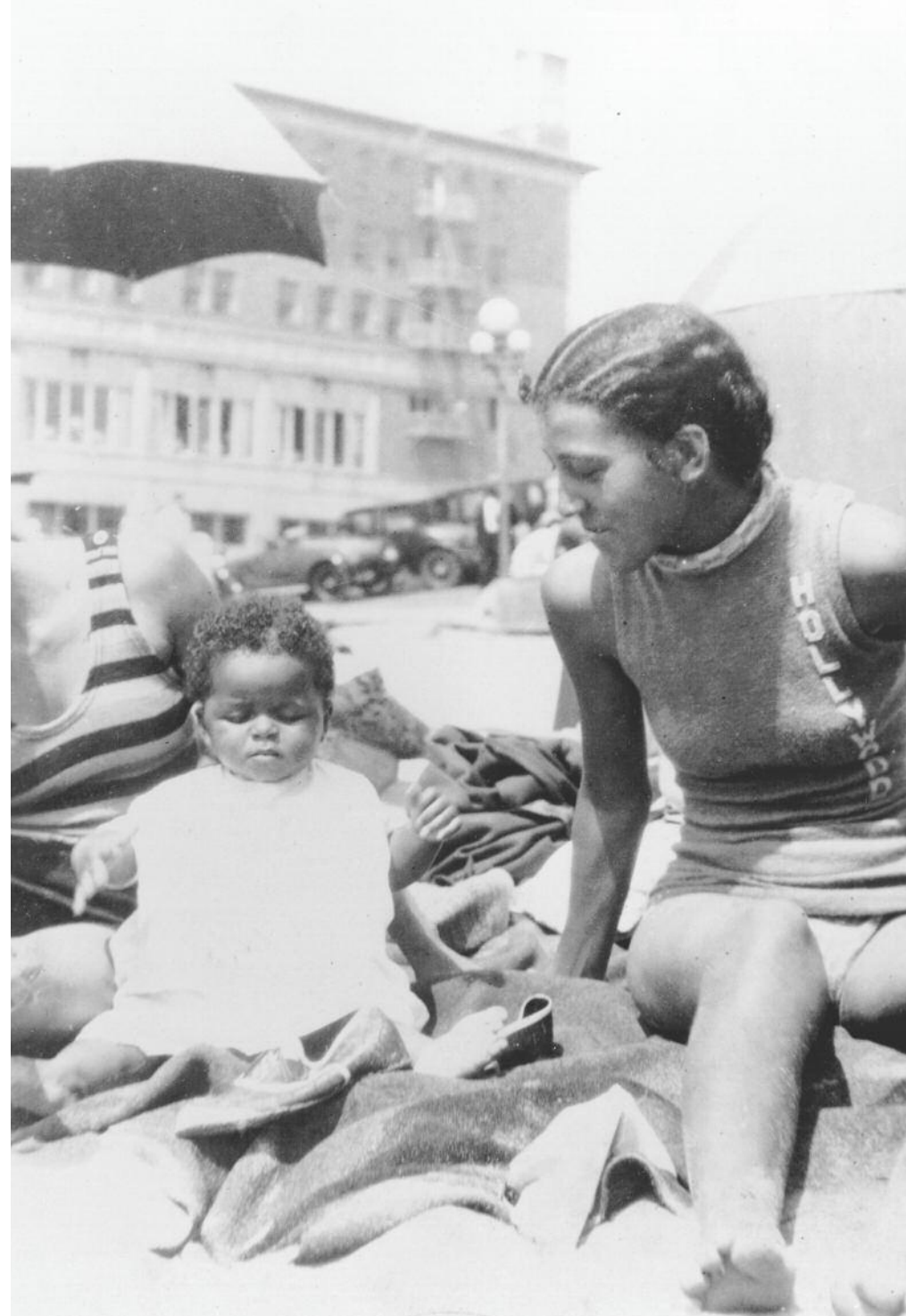
Trouble was breaking out else-

where along the coast during this time. In Huntington Beach, a Black-owned club was torched. In Manhattan Beach, a well-established Black resort was shuttered through the city's use of eminent domain. A *Los Angeles Times* news article from 1922, noting the defeat of the Santa Monica plan, ends with a wider call for landholders to bar non-whites from the beach cities: "Property owners throughout the district are being urged to follow suit with a Caucasian clause which will prevent the leasing, occupancy or sale of any property to persons not of the Caucasian race." In this atmosphere, which Jefferson says was fed by the arrival of many white Southerners who brought their more rigidly racist system with them, the stretch of beach in Santa Monica, labeled by some as the "Ink Well," became more and more of a sanctuary for the Black community.

**TELLING THE STORY** of that sanctuary, Jefferson spends most of her time away from the shore, poring over old city records, scrolling through countless pages on microfiche and drawing recollections out of octogenarians. She has looked through issue after issue of the *California Eagle* and the *Santa Monica Evening Outlook*, a tedious task which yielded a crucial clue: the number of the city ordinance that effectively blocked the Santa Monica project. That ordinance number allowed Jefferson to retrieve a copy of the old law from city hall and flesh out the story of what happened beyond the choppy and often racially-charged newspaper accounts of yore.

Uncovering the details of how cities such as Santa Monica (and Manhattan Beach and elsewhere) used their power to disenfranchise Blacks was shocking even for a trained historian such as Jefferson, who describes it as "a moment of 'yes, this is something that people need to know about.'" The effects of these past efforts to thwart Black entrepreneurship and property rights still reach into the present, says Jefferson, noting the long-term impact on issues such as the location of L.A.'s Black population.

Jefferson goes at her research with perseverance and a thorough methodology, says Kenneth Breisch, director of the graduate program in historic preservation at USC's architectural school. Her work is particularly challenging,



Breisch notes, because the history of the leisure spots is much more ephemeral than, say, the work of documenting a historic building.

"She's tended to bring attention to the areas of our past that are sometimes controversial or difficult but that need to be recognized and remembered," says Breisch, former president of the Santa Monica Conservancy.

With limited written documentation to draw information from, Jefferson says her beach research has been a "journey of networking," as she turns to collecting oral histories about the beach from members of longtime L.A. and Santa Monica families. One older woman remembered that stretch of Santa Monica as a place to meet L.A. boys; an elderly man told of heading there in his youth to be by himself and clear his head.

Now, though, the remaining personal recollections of the beach are dying off with that older generation. "Some of their children know something about it," she says. "But some of them don't—many of them don't."

**JEFFERSON'S OWN MEMORIES**, at least indirectly, got her started on this project. Growing up in Los Angeles, she had always heard stories from her mom's family about the days when a Black-owned resort beckoned from Lake Elsinore. Those stories stayed with her. During her youth in the '60s and '70s, Jefferson was free to visit any beach, but she had always wondered why she didn't have any Black friends that lived along the coast. That question stayed with her, too.

Answers would be a long time coming. After majoring in sociology at Pomona, Jefferson went on to do marketing and P.R. work in the music industry, and then for a business improvement district in downtown Los Angeles. That last role put her in touch with historic preservation issues—she had always been interested in history—and in 2003, she entered the masters program in historic preservation at USC.

For a class taught by the eminent California historian Kevin Starr, Jefferson offered possible paper topics that included Riverside's famously ornate Mission Inn hotel and African-American vacation spots in Southern California. Starr, she recalls, quickly scotched that first topic, saying it was overdone: "But those vacation areas, people don't really know anything about that. Why don't you write about that?"

The feedback on her paper was positive, and she recalls Starr telling her, "You might have a little more here that you can do something with."

Jefferson ran with that. She went on to do research on Phillips Chapel, the old Black church with well-worn pink stucco that still overlooks Santa Monica's beach. That work drew the atten-

tion of civic leaders, who didn't know this side of their city's past, and she soon found herself giving highly attended talks for such groups as the Santa Monica Conservancy. Jefferson keeps turning up more to explore, and she plans to continue taking her work beyond scholarly circles, perhaps with an exhibition or a book.


On Santa Monica's beach, high visibility already has been achieved. Last year, dignitaries gathered and the city unveiled a plaque marking the Ink Well as "a place a celebration and pain." Though others had lobbied for it, Jefferson was asked to craft the language for the marker and speak at the dedication ceremony. Set along the busy Strand bike path, the monument is hard to miss, ensuring that the story Jefferson worked so hard to uncover finally stays out in the open. ✦



EVER SINCE HIS FIRST VOYAGE AT THE AGE OF 4, NELSON ARNSTEIN '75 HAS BEEN OBSESSED WITH THE WORLD'S GREAT OCEAN LINERS.

# MAN OVERBOARD

By Valerie Takahama



On the storm-lashed North Atlantic, the bow of Holland America Line's *SS Rotterdam* slices through one pearl-white wave after another, the ship rising and falling in a stomach-churning roller coaster of motion.

Pricey Lladro porcelain figurines in the gift shop crash and shatter. Crew members clutch the brass railings. Ashen-faced passengers scramble to their cabins.

Not Nelson Arnstein '75. He's exhilarated as he stalks along the dangerously slick deck recording the storm on video. Arnstein is an ocean liner buff, first class.

Since he made his first transatlantic crossing on the *RMS Queen Mary* at age 4, he has felt most at home when he's at sea. He's traversed the Atlantic on various ocean liners nearly 20 times, including this "magnificently rough" crossing aboard the *Rotterdam* a decade ago.

More recently, he took part in an historic farewell journey aboard *Queen Elizabeth 2*, which is destined to become a floating hotel and museum. *QE2* made a rare tandem transatlantic crossing last fall with her fleet mate, *Queen Mary 2*, before going out of service as the fastest and longest-running ocean liner in the Cunard Line's 168-year history.

Arnstein flew to England for the trip, boarded *QM2* in Southampton and had a clear view of *QE2* steaming all the way across the ocean. In New York, he switched ships and sailed eastward in *QE2*.

Back in Southampton he engaged in his own private farewell ritual.

"When I step on the ship or off the ship, if I really love it, I'll go—," he says, and kisses his fingers, and touches the plating.

"I've been doing that since I was a kid. It's crazy, I know."

Arnstein doesn't leave the craziness behind when he steps off the gangplank.

A physician who runs the department of nuclear medicine at a Kaiser Permanente medical center near Los Angeles, he spends hours of his spare time—and tens of thousands of dollars—researching and collecting ocean liner memorabilia, everything from teak deck chairs from the *Queen Mary* to a rare vintage travel poster for the *SS Titanic*. He owns a wall sconce from the *Mauretania*, a porthole from the wreck of the *Republic*, a lifeboat compass from the *SS United States*. "It was like walking into a museum," says Bob Soliday, a friend and fellow ocean liner aficionado, about his first visit to Arnstein's home. "He's very meticulous."

Take, for example, a cabinet filled with Art Deco china, silver and other memorabilia from Arnstein's favorite vessel, the French Line's super liner *Normandie*. "Those glasses are Lalique, they're signed by René Lalique," Soliday says, pointing to elegant crystal stemware in the case. "René Lalique's daughter Suzanne designed these plates. They're actually gilded in platinum. You won't see that on Carnival today."

But museum-quality artifacts are not all that make a visit to Arnstein's home so memorable. He lives in a high-rise condo on Ocean Boulevard in Long Beach. When Arnstein draws the drapes in the living room, he reveals a panoramic view of the ocean, boats in the marina and the *Queen Mary* herself, berthed a mile or so away.

"It's nice to be able to tell my friends it's the biggest piece in my collection," he says, grinning boyishly.

Arnstein moved to Long Beach in 2002, and he takes full advantage of his proximity to the *Queen Mary*. "He's the Energizer bunny," says friend Robert Strolka. "Nelson offers you an adventure."

Leading an impromptu tour on a recent fall evening, Arnstein passes through the gift shops he calls his "candy stores," then lopes up and down stairwells and down long passageways. Ignoring a "Crew Members Only" sign on a door, he enters a storage room with linen and folded tables: "This used to be the third-class dining room."

In a deserted part of the ship, he pulls on a door that opens into a small, darkened room, the memorial sanctuary of the four "Immortal Chaplains" who gave away their own lifejackets to spare others after a U.S. Army troopship was torpedoed off Greenland during World War II. Arnstein spends a few moments in the low light of the sanctuary studying the display in complete silence.

Mostly, though, he's in full tour-guide mode on the *Queen Mary*. Ask him anything about ocean liners, and Arnstein seems to have the answer.

He can tick off the details of the first 19th-century crossings, right down to the number of wooden bunks and the famous passengers, which included Charles Dickens, who called his cabin in Cunard's original paddle steamer *Britannia* "an utterly preposterous box." And don't get him started on his favorite ship, the *SS Normandie*. "The *Queen Mary* had warmth, but *Normandie* had style. ... People who sailed in her were probably dressed in the ultimate in Parisian fashion."

He traces the seeds of his grand obsession to his family history. His mother, who was born in England, first traveled to America in 1940 in convoy, witnessing the bombing of the *Empress of Britain* by the German *Luftwaffe*. Arnstein's parents later made annual crossings when he and his siblings were growing up.

He doesn't remember his first crossing in the *Queen Mary*, but the journey is part of family lore, too. "We were in the Churchill Suite. The three of us, my mom, my brother and I would rotate beds so that we could say we slept in the same bed that Winston Churchill slept in."

Like other ocean liner buffs, Arnstein admits he's drawn to times past and the aura of privilege and high style the great ships embody. Although he's taken plenty of cruise vacations, he prefers ocean liners with their white-gloved servers who offer bouillon from Art Deco silver and teak trolleys to cruise ships with their rock-climbing walls and wave machines.

But it's something more than snob appeal, even something more than the doctor's own prescription and cure for the pressures he faces treating patients with life-threatening diseases. He feels it in his bones as a vessel cuts through wave after wave on the endless, open sea. "The motion—I love the motion. The vibration. The salt air," Arnstein says. "You're on an enormous living thing in a way. A ship is *alive*. They're born, they live, they get old and they die. Just like we do. That's not my own saying, but I think it is true." ❖



# Meaty Issues

**B**ETTY HARPER FUSSELL '48 TASTED HER FIRST STEAK when she was a freshman living in the dorms. "I thought it had a wonderful flavor but it took so long to chew," says Fussell, who was raised in a home where food was steamed into submission in a pressure cooker.

Despite her dismal culinary roots, Fussell is obsessed with food: its origins, cultural importance and political implications. Her latest book, *Raising Steaks: The Life and Times of American Beef*, tells the story of America's iconic meat through a blend of history and personal narrative.

Fussell says *Raising Steaks* is a logical follow up to *The Story of Corn*, an in-depth study of the plant as a crop, religion and culture, since all industrial beef is corn-fed. The controversy and contrast between corn-fed and grass-fed, which is "nature's way," lies at the heart of *Raising Steaks*.

Four years of researching and writing took Fussell from a small subsistence farm in Northeast Vermont to the hamlet of Brothers in the high desert of eastern Oregon and south to the historic cattle spreads near the Rio Grande.

Along the way, she introduces readers to an eclectic cast of characters including contemporary cattlemen, animal welfare advocates, a cowboy hat maker and mothers obsessed with mad-cow disease.

Fussell's favorites are Texans Danny Butler and his cousins who own what are some of the oldest cattle ranches in the United States. They are descendants of Scotch-Irish entrepreneurs who came to the country in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century and married Spanish-Mexican heiresses with land grants.

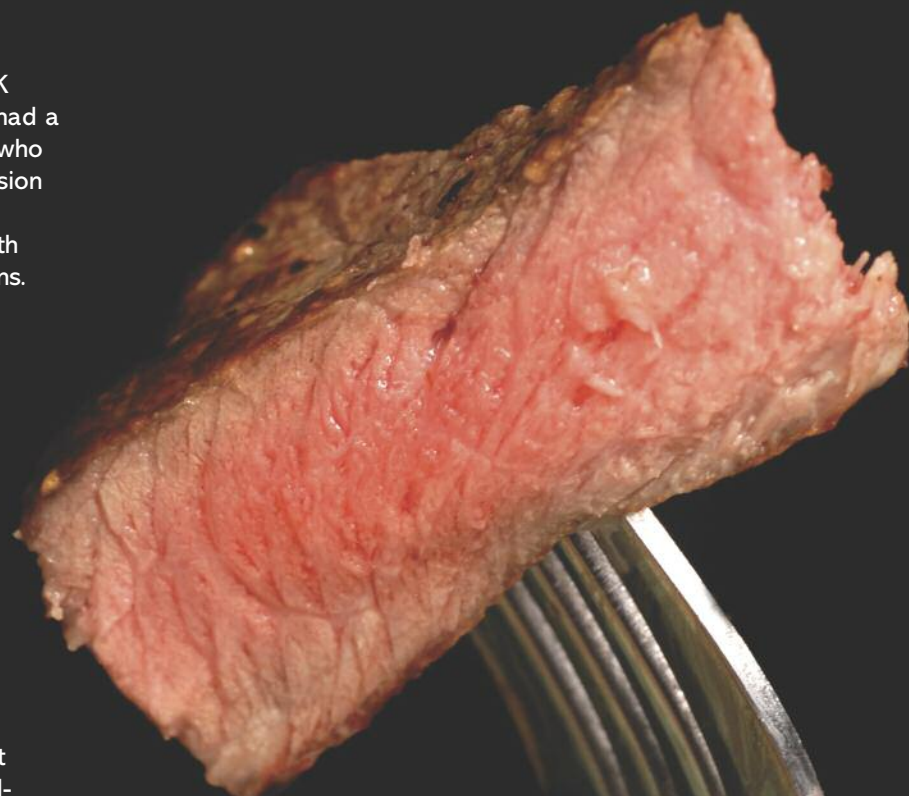
Their story traces how Texas evolved from cattle empire to the home of wild game breeding and hunting preserves where bankers and accountants in camouflage stalk African antelope and farm-raised whitetail deer.

While researching her book, Fussell says she was struck by the fact that nobody can make a living raising cattle today unless they are part of a giant conglomerate: "The fact that it's antediluvian in a way yet is still so much a part of peoples'

## Raising Steaks: The Life and Times of American Beef

By Betty Fussell '48

Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2008 • 416 pages/ \$26



romantic imagery surprised me."

Tracing the roots of American steakhouses that sprung up near the slaughterhouses of New York where cattle were turned into beef, Fussell writes that these eateries are about the "joys of carnival excess."

"The romance of the steakhouse, like the romance of the cowboy, is rooted in a deep American nostalgia for male rituals, the more primitive the better." ♦

—Elaine Regus

## RECIPE: American Kobe Steak Tartare

**KOBE BEEF** once meant a Wagyu breed imported from its native Japan, but today American Kobe beef is the result of ranchers crossbreeding Wagyu with breeds like Angus. And people are gobbling it up because it tastes so good. Genetically Wagyu is geared to marble its muscle up to 10 times as much as a good marbler like Angus, so much so that I think of an American Kobe steak as a different product entirely from, say, an Angus rib-eye. Kobe's more like beef butter, akin to *foie gras*, and because it's so easy to overcook, I prefer to eat Kobe raw, as in steak tartare. Remember when that form of raw beef was common place on a classy menu long before raw fish at sushi bars overtook the American palate? And remember when Steak Tartare disappeared after health scares about commodity beef some 20 years ago? Well, now that we're paying attention to where our beef comes from, now that we're separating artisanal from industrial beef, now that we can research how a rancher's cow is bred, fed, cared for and processed, Steak Tartare rides again. Nothing tastes better than pure beef held together with a textured and highly seasoned mayonnaise that suggests the wild cowboys of Genghis Kahn.

### American Kobe Steak Tartare

1½ lbs. American Kobe sirloin, finely chopped  
3 anchovy fillets, chopped  
1 tablespoon chopped onion  
1 tablespoon capers, rinsed  
2 tablespoons chopped parsley leaves  
1 large egg yolk  
2 teaspoons Dijon mustard  
1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce  
1 teaspoon cognac  
2 tablespoons olive oil  
½ teaspoon black pepper  
Tabasco to taste  
Toast points

With a sharp knife, chop the meat as fine as you can and then chop again. (A food processor may turn this beef to mush.) Next chop the anchovies, onion, capers and parsley until they are uniform in size. In a large bowl beat the egg yolk with the mustard, Worcestershire and cognac. Gradually beat in the olive oil until the mixture thickens. Add pepper and Tabasco. Add the meat and chopped ingredients and mix well but very gently with your hands to keep the meat light and air-filled. Form gently into four to six patties and top each with a toast point set upright. ♦

—Betty Fussell '48

## Bookmarks / Alumni and Faculty Authors and Artists

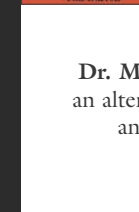


### Create A Great Deal

*The Art of Real Estate Negotiating*

Drawing on his experience selling real estate on both coasts, **Tim Burrell '70** creates a comprehensive guide to win-win negotiations that generate better deals.

Silloway Press, 2009 / 247 pages / \$19.95



### The Spiritual Anatomy of Emotion

**Dr. Marc Micozzi '74** along with co-author Michael Jawer, presents an alternative to the pervasive theory that the brain controls the body and generates all feelings and perceptions. They contend it is our feelings that underlie our conscious selves.

Park Street Press, 2009 / 576 pages / \$24.95



### This Day in San Diego History

**Linda H. Pequegnat '53** compiled 366 items on significant events, influential persons and places of note in San Diego and its environs. The retired research marine biologist presents both well-known facts and lively trivia of the second-largest city in California.

Sunbelt Publications, 2009 / 400 pages / \$19.95

### Reproductive Health and Human Rights: The Way Forward

**Laura Reichenbach '88** co-edited the latest book in the *Pennsylvania Studies in Human Rights* series, featuring the past 15 years of efforts aimed at improving health, alleviating poverty, diminishing gender inequality and promoting human rights.

University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009 / 384 pages / \$69.95



### Fundamentals of Japanese Dance Kabuki Dance

Theatre Professor **Leonard Pronko** translated with Tomono Takao, Pomona lecturer, this richly illustrated book by Hanayagi Chiyo, the first of its kind published in English.

Kodansha Shuppan, 2008 / 266 pages / ¥ 7,000

### The Enduring Legacy

*Oil, Culture, and Society in Venezuela*

History and Chicano/a Studies Professor **Miguel Tinker Salas** traces the rise of the oil industry in Venezuela and examines its pervasive influence on all aspects of life for generations of Venezuelans.

Duke University Press, 2009 / 324 pages / \$23.95



### MUSIC: To the West Wind and Franz Schubert: Sonata in B-flat Major Six Moments Musicaux

Both CDs feature pianist **Raj B. Bhimani '82** in performances of Brenet, Debussy, Rave and Schubert.

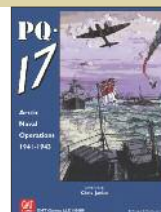
Delatour France, 2008 / 15.55 EUR

### BOARD GAME: PQ-17

*Arctic Naval Operations, 1941-1943*

Game designer **Chris Janiec '75** affords two players the opportunity to examine and possibly change World War II naval history in a board war game. Includes the battles of the Barents Sea and North Cape plus seven other historical scenarios.

GMT Games, 2009 / \$69





History / Asian Traditions

# IN CLASS *with Professor Sam Yamashita*

*The following is an edited excerpt from a classroom discussion in the course in Asian Traditions taught by Professor Sam Yamashita during spring 2009.*

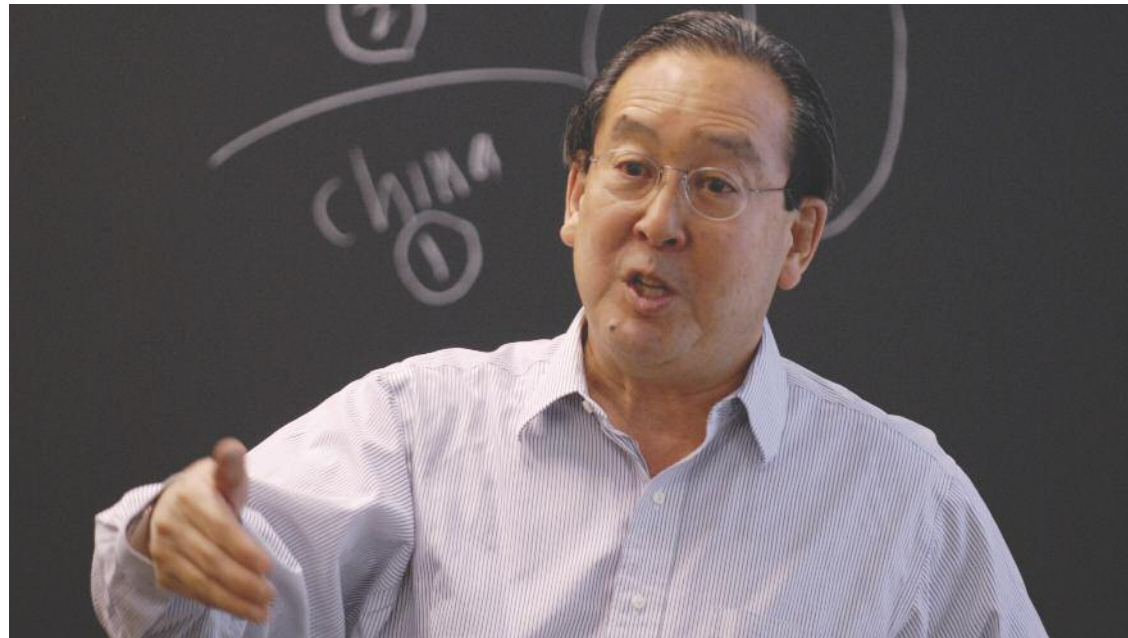
**YAMASHITA:** Last week we continued our discussion of medieval China and the three so-called “slow changes” that took place in this extended period that runs from Song into the Ming Dynasty. In addition to economic and technological changes, I talked about interesting intellectual changes that resulted in something modern scholars call Neo-Confucianism...

Today, let’s talk about Neo-Confucianism and whether you think the ruling elite shared a discourse, and what you’ve found in your reading to support your point of view.

**KELLY:** All these writers had a stake in the potential of individuals and faith in their ability to create an ideal society based on morality and collective responsibility. When they developed this new Confucianist dialogue in response to Buddhism and Daoism; there was an idea that humans are innately good and full of intelligence and can produce an effective society.

**YAMASHITA:** Did anyone argue against the idea of a shared discourse?

**ELIOT:** I didn’t feel that there were a lot of shared ideas. I was looking at Wang Anshi, and it seemed his primary concern was the Chinese state and his secondary concern was the welfare of the people. In his writing, he supported the service exemption law and the benefits he listed were meeting the manpower and financial needs of the state and strengthening military power. Instead of arguing for the benefits of the people, he was arguing for the state.



**YAMASHITA:** Wang Anshi did write some poetry where he expresses some concerns for the people, the hungry and the homeless, but it was not included in your reading. That might lead you to change your thoughts. What would be something that would make you think that someone is not a Neo-Confucian? Mr. Chang has suggested it might be a preponderant interest in the state as opposed to the individual.

**JAMES:** It would seem to me from the reading that Neo-Confucianism was more secular than spiritual, that what would disqualify one from being a Neo-Confucian would have to do with an obsession with spiritual beliefs and less dealing with the state and the secular.

**YAMASHITA:** Because Neo-Confucians were very interested in the state, in the welfare of the people, you’re saying if someone were obsessed with individual spiritual cultivation that might disqualify them?

**CHRISTOPHER:** I would say they would be disqualified by advocating withdrawal from any social or political institutions.

**YAMASHITA:** In concrete terms what would we look for?

**CHRISTOPHER:** If someone spent weekends away at a monastery and wasn’t attentive to family.

**YAMASHITA:** Let me play the devil’s advocate. We’ve all recognized to some degree that there are Confucian and Legalist elements [in what you read]. What if we consider leaving out Legalist elements and have a discourse that is highly Confucian—maybe even eliminate Legalist elements. Would that work?

**COSIMO:** I think it would not work quite as well to get rid of the Legalist traditions because it seems to somewhat ground Confucianism as far the state is concerned. A lot of Confucian morality

has to do with family relations and filial relations and I feel like the Legalist additions to it allows it to apply more to state relationships.

**YAMASHITA:** But remember that some of us believe that what is most important is the person as opposed to law, and so couldn’t we just choose good Confucians, people who were well versed in Confucian philosophy and practice and trust them with making sure that Confucianism is grounded and having them execute the policies of the state?

**COSIMO:** I suppose it’s theoretically possible. I’m not sure if it was done in practice.

**YAMASHITA:** Anyone want to argue strongly that one could have a state that was run exclusively on Confucian principles?

**CHRISTOPHER:** I saw them grappling with that problem in their discussions about the examination system. They saw that forcing people to know all the Confucian classics did not necessarily create good people; it created people who were good at memorizing books. A lot of them advocated creating a more personal examination system that involved conversing with people and learning whether they had good moral sensibilities.

**CALUM:** The only way you could stick to Confucian ideas is if you had an incredible cult of personality but you would still have to have a law component because that cult might be powerful enough around the capital but to make that cult be feared you would have to have a legal element that would be effective 1,000 miles away.

**YAMASHITA:** So you think it’s possible if one is careful. What if we were to shift to the other side of the equation and eliminate Confucianism and have a state run solely according to Legalist principles, focusing on law and punishment?

**LESLIE:** With states that are larger and have more people I feel it would be better to rule more with the law than Confucian ideals; if you have a small town where everyone knows everyone else you have a sense for how people are and what morals they abide by. In a large state you can’t know what people believe and how they act and in order to control that and create civility it would be more important to have laws that can keep people in check.

**IAN:** I don’t think it’s possible to have an entirely Legalist state—the Legalist system doesn’t provide morality or values and creates an atmosphere where people were out for themselves. I could see a legal system combined with Buddhism and Daoism.

**YAMASHITA:** That’s an argument for combining Legalism with Confucianism or maybe Buddhism or Daoism. In point of fact, most individuals who passed the civil service exams were familiar with Legalism; they knew the Chinese classics but they also were familiar with Daoism and to some extent with Buddhism, and we see this best in their private writings, poetry and essays, in their paintings and their inscriptions. The elite was pretty well versed in all these things. Legalism and Confucianism were main elements in their public lives and Daoism was central in their private lives; some combination of these three religions and philosophies mattered. So it’s an interesting case that, whether by accident or design, this elite was trained internally and externally; trained as private individuals but also public personas as well. ✚



## Glossary

**Legalism** is a classical Chinese philosophy that dates from the Zhou period (771-221 B.C.E.) and promotes the use of law, reward and punishment in governing.

**Ming Dynasty** (1368-1644) followed a period of Mongol rule and found China changing its orientation from a maritime to a continental state.

**Neo-Confucianism** was a synthetic philosophy that was created during the Song Dynasty (960-1279) and combined Confucian, Daoist and Buddhist ideas, practices and institutions.

**Song Dynasty** (960-1279), one of China’s great dynasties, is regarded by students of world history as the most advanced state of the day.

**Wang Anshi** (1021-1086) was a brilliant statesman, reformer and poet who proposed a series of state-centered reforms known as the “New Laws” that included a farm loan program and state marketing system.



English / Professor Kathleen Fitzpatrick

# The Wallace Legacy

**G**rief, it has been said, can take many forms. Some mourners retreat into seclusion; others take up activities to occupy their time and thoughts. Last fall, in the weeks following the tragic death of famed novelist and Pomona Creative Writing Professor David Foster Wallace, Professor Kathleen Fitzpatrick developed a compelling urge to delve into the complete works of her friend and colleague—and wanted students to take part in it, too.

“I felt there were probably a lot of students at Pomona who had hoped to work with [Wallace] during their time here,” says Fitzpatrick, professor of English and media studies. “I wanted to bring the community together to work through the material, and therefore work through the legacy that he left behind.”

Last semester, Fitzpatrick and her class of 30 sifted through an immense literary catalog of texts that spanned from Wallace’s seldom-read writings as an Amherst College undergrad to *New Yorker* pieces published during his tenure at Pomona. It was, in Fitzpatrick’s words, a “terrifying, exhilarating and emotional experience.”

The elective course brought together students from a cross-section of campuses, class years and fields of study. (Wallace’s science-savvy tangents attracted more than a few physics and biology majors.) “Because his ideas are so universal, the class came to be about more than just the writing,” says Lauren Rosenfield ’11, a

Wallace neophyte who was quickly captivated by the author’s prose. “We were talking about bigger concepts of life and meaning and relationships.”

Julius Taranto ’12, who entered the

course well-versed in most of Wallace’s writings, nevertheless gleaned much from the discussions and was struck by his classmates’ passionate yet pretension-free tone. “People were thinking seriously

about the material, but nobody was trying to flaunt their background in literary criticism,” he says. “It was interesting and productive without being steeped in jargon.”

Utilizing online avenues to explore Wallace’s work, Fitzpatrick set up a blog in which students discussed the writing,

and also had the class create a wiki (<http://machines.pomona.edu/dfwwiki>) based on the readings and discussions. “I viewed the course as this collective experience,” she says, “and thought it was important for us to contribute something as a goodbye to the material and to him.” The wiki included an author biography, a complete bibliography and a breakdown of themes Wallace explores in his writing.

Pursuing such topics as loneliness and self-loathing was an inherently delicate proposal given the circumstances of Wallace’s passing. Fitzpatrick laments the fact that authors’ suicides so often result in literary scholars mining their works for warning signs. “It’s a mistake to read it that way,” she says, “because writing was no small part of what kept David alive.”

And while Fitzpatrick concedes that the humble Wallace would have hated the thought of a class dedicated to his work, she has no regrets about the course, calling it one of the best teaching experiences of her career. “I wasn’t sure how equipped I was to handle the task, but I was ener-

gized by the focus and enthusiasm of my students,” she says. “It was both extremely difficult and exactly the right thing to do.”

—Adam Conner-Simons ’08



## The Wigs 2009

**E**ach year, the juniors and seniors elect the winners of the Wig Distinguished Professor Awards. Established by Mr. and Mrs. R.J. Wig in 1955, the awards recognize exceptional teaching, concern for students and service to the College and community. Here is a list of the 2009 winners, with comments from student ballots:

**Eleanor P. Brown**, the James Irvine Professor of Economics and the coordinator of the Philosophy, Politics and Economics Program

- “Professor Brown is fair, clear, intelligent, strong and subtly wry. A great teacher.”
- “I couldn’t have even dreamed that I’d find somebody as interesting, accessible and helpful as Professor Brown to take an interest in my life and academic pursuits.”

**Stephan R. Garcia**, assistant professor of mathematics

- “He is exceptional at getting abstract points across, often using multiple methods to really hammer in concepts. Professor Garcia truly makes learning enjoyable and knowledge concrete.”
- “He is phenomenally organized ... He types his own lecture notes that he posts online immediately after class ends, never springs topics on students and regularly asks for feedback (and addresses student concerns)... Most impressive, however, is his commitment to students.”

**Susan J. McWilliams**, assistant professor of politics

- “She inspires all kinds of creative thought and urges students to engage and challenge the theories of seemingly inaccessible philosophers and political figures. I’ve never felt closer to Abraham Lincoln or more annoyed with Ralph Waldo Emerson in my life... In her class, she encourages genuine reflection on the choices we make as young Americans.”
- “Susan McWilliams is brilliant and vibrant! ... She is able to impart a deep respect for history and politics in even the most apolitical of students.”

**Gilda L. Ochoa**, associate professor of sociology and Chicano/a studies

- “With compassion, honesty and encouragement, every student that passes through her doors leaves them having worked harder than they ever thought they could and having learned more than they could have imagined.”
- “Dr. Gilda Ochoa is the best professor I’ve had during my four years at Pomona College due to her simultaneous commitment to providing challenging courses while caring for her students’ personal, academic and emotional growth.”

**Ghassan Y. Sarkis**, assistant professor of mathematics

- “Professor Sarkis is a great lecturer. ... [He] helped to deepen my excitement about math and was one of the reasons that I became a math major.”
- “Challenged and inspired me to become a better mathematician than I ever thought possible. Ghassan Sarkis is a ‘mathemagician.’”

**Tomás F. Summers Sandoval, Jr.**, assistant professor of history and Chicano/a studies

- “Professor Summers Sandoval is a passionate, introspective, intelligent and kind teacher. I learned a great deal in his class and have used what I learned in other courses.”
- “So incredibly friendly and encouraging, clearly passionate about what he does and when he lived on campus was always welcoming students into his home and his family.”

**Jonathan C. Wright**, associate professor of biology

- “Dr. Wright gives teaching maximum effort and thought, and it shows in his fun and interesting classes and labs. ... Dr. Wright’s sense of wonder and interest about biology is truly infectious.”
- “Not only is he always willing to talk and help, he is genuinely excited about whatever project a student may be tackling. His enthusiasm for student research is unmatched, and he dedicates more time and energy than I would have ever thought possible.”



TERRIL JONES'S PHOTO OF THE TIANANMEN  
"TANK MAN" OFFERS A NEW VIEW OF HISTORY.  
BUT WHY HOLD ONTO IT FOR TWO DECADES?

# Tank Man

BY TERRIL JONES '80

SOMETIMES WE DO THINGS—or don't do things—that we can't easily explain. This summer I've been mulling over how I sat on, without publishing or publicizing, a remarkable photograph for two decades ... a picture I took 20 years ago that is an alternate viewpoint of an iconic image that captivated much of the world.

I only shared my photo with a handful of friends until I agreed to its publication this summer in *The New York Times* online, generating media buzz and strong emotions.

How did the picture stay under wraps for so long? This is the first time that I have recounted the full story.

I took the photo on June 5, 1989, as a reporter for *The Associated Press* covering the Tiananmen Square protests and military crackdown on protesters in Beijing. It's a shot of the man who had the famous confrontation with the line of Chinese army tanks, a different angle of the well-known image that we've all seen of Man vs. Tank. That photo—actually photos, since the same scene was captured by four different photographers from essentially the same location atop the Beijing Hotel—has become a symbol around the world of democracy movements, people power and photojournalism itself.

I was standing at the front of the Beijing Hotel around lunchtime when I heard shots emanating from the direction of the square a couple of hundred meters to the west. People were running east toward me. I could hear the grinding motors of tanks not far down the road and more shots coming from that direction. I raised my Nikon F-801 SLR camera and squeezed off a single shot of a column of tanks I could see



AP PHOTO/TERRIL JONES

At left, one of the famous photos of the "Tank Man." Above, Jones's photo, in which the "Tank Man" may be seen (background, left) walking toward the scene of the encounter while the tanks advance on the right.



AP PHOTO/JEFF WIDENER

approaching from the right, then I ducked down a side street and into an entrance to the Beijing Hotel where I was staying.

I made my way up to Room 1131 and took another picture or two from the balcony. I remember being obsessed with the thought that

authorities would break into my room to seize my film, just as an agent from the Gonganju (Public Security Bureau) and some uniformed police had done in the lobby of the Beijing Hotel on a previous night, confiscating a two-hour videotape—two hours!—of events I had taken over the last days leading up to the crackdown. I quickly hid my cameras and film in an air vent in the ceiling of the bathroom as I had been doing for a few days. I later learned that other photographers had also hidden film in their hotel rooms—in a toilet tank, for instance.

Later that day I took my equipment and film to AP's Beijing bureau where, on a chaotic news day, the film was developed and a photo editor selected one or two frames from my rolls to send out on the wire. Earlier that day the bureau had transmitted AP's striking bird's-eye image of the man stopping the tank, and as reaction to that photo and the day's events swirled around us, the rest of my negatives were returned to me.

It was only some time after I returned to my home in Tokyo, in mid-July, that I printed out select copies of the photos, and even later—a month? Six months? Longer?—that I printed out full-size, 8-by-10-inch copies of certain frames. At some point—I honestly cannot remember when—I realized that one of my photos had captured a different angle of that signature confrontation, well before the tanks reached the defiant man.

I remember being mesmerized but at the same time disappointed, thinking it wasn't as dramatic as the famous photos already known to the rest of the world. Even though there was terror and confusion expressed in the faces of people fleeing, the man himself seemed so small, so easily missed. There is also a bicyclist who seems jarringly nonchalant—did I just catch him at a moment with his head up? Or when he was standing to push down hard on a pedal? Or was he a member of the security apparatus and knew he didn't have to worry about getting arrested?

I probably thought to myself those 19 or 20 years ago that the world had already seen the better view of this incident and

of this man, and that I had missed the moment. I packed the photos away and carried them with me through a series of moves over the years—from Japan to France to New York City to Michigan to San Francisco to Virginia.

Last year I spent six months at Ohio State University on a Kiplinger Fellowship studying digital media recording, editing and presentation techniques. There I'd started a multimedia made-for-online documentary on Chinese youth, using images I took covering the protests in 1989 and some I took at the Beijing Olympics in 2008.

But I was finding it difficult placing my project with a news organization's Website. On June 4, *The New York Times*' new photography blog called Lens published the previously known photos of the Man vs. Tank, along with the stories of the four photographers who took them. A news photographer friend who knew of my picture emailed me, asking, "Shouldn't you be among them too?"

I contacted *The Times*, showed them the photo and was bowled over by the response. They were "speechless" and keen on being the first to carry the picture. "You'll forever be known as the Fifth Photographer," I was told ... how much more convincing did I need?

The photo was published online (<http://xrl.us/bervf5k>) and viewer reaction was swift, voluminous and, for me, overwhelmingly humbling. Comments said the photo was "unbelievable," "breathtaking" and "dripping with emotion." Several said they felt goose bumps or had tears in their eyes when they saw it.

Many offered their own interpretations, stating for instance that the photo "paints a picture of an even steeper measure of resolve within the man confronting the tank," or is "Proof positive, if it has ever been needed, that the study of all history, everywhere must be free, open to new information and new perspectives as new facts come to light." One reader expressed thanks for "a great service to history," and another said, "Without a doubt I am moved to be a better person."

That's heady stuff. In 28 years of journalism, I've never gotten such emotional responses to anything I've written. I was floored by the passionate feedback, and also by how the media and networking of today accelerated reaction in ways that didn't exist when the photo was taken. Friends emailed appreciation. Dozens of sites across the blogosphere linked to the photo, which also got me written into Wikipedia's "Tank Man" entry. Strangers who liked the picture friended me on Facebook.

All this has led me to reassess what the photo tells us. I saw that the still-unidentified man clearly premeditated his stand well before the tanks were upon him; he didn't dart out for the confrontation moments before. He seems calm and prepared—could he have been mentally unstable as some have suggested? He appears to be abandoned by those running for cover, yet he also seems to be clearing a path for them to do so.

I've also realized how strongly that image continues to resonate with people, underscoring the importance of a free—and well-staffed—press corps around the world. The visceral responses that the photo has evoked make me wish I had come forward with it publicly much sooner. ✚



Cryptic Crossword / by Lynne Willems Zold '67 and Tony Zold '66

Fun and Games Answers on Page 56

1	2		3	4	5	6		7
8				9				
10		11						
12	13				14		15	
16	17					18		
	19	20			21			22
	23		24		25		26	
	27					28		
29					30			

Directions:

Cryptic puzzle clues have two parts—a simple definition and a “cryptic” clue such as an anagram, a homophone, two definitions, a word with added or deleted letters, or an answer hidden in the clue or in the initial capitals. (Example—Clue: “Tree got mixed up in mess. Period.” Answer: “semester” [Definition: “Period”; Cryptic clue: anagram, signaled by “mixed up,” combining “tree” and “mess.”])

Across

- 1 Bawl loudly for a toy. (4)
- 2 Playful animal bites Potter’s head off. (5)
- 8 It’s cold enough up there to freeze water. (3)
- 9 Eros juggled some fish eggs. (4)
- 10 Hold off the children’s game. (8)
- 12 Economic adjustments required new chief for gain. (4)
- 14 Lamps hold the strength of electrical current. (3)
- 17 Big boy’s toy zooms around a track. (7)
- 19 Primal: every animal tries to consume. (3)
- 21 Don’t put jewelry on slobbering, messy guy. (4)
- 23 Scum, no, er, rabble puts together letters in this word game. (8)
- 27 Share an audition for a famous singer/actress. (4)
- 28 Observe the endless seeds. (3)
- 29 Chest holds a game in which 4th place doubles and 5th drops out. (5)
- 30 Kiss clumsily and then they run in the snow. (4)

Down

- 1 Ride a velocipede. (4)
- 2 Some places have a top pilot. (3)
- 3 Lotion is perfect start for kissing. (3)
- 5 Drag behind but stows in the middle. (3)
- 6 Jerked meat from a pair of oxen. (4)
- 7 Horses compete on Hollywood Drive. (5)
- 9 17’s toy runs in reverse and ends up where it started. (7)
- 11 Pitcher’s stat in one period of time. (3)
- 13 After Roosevelt environmentalists came to be. (3)
- 15 In favor of a hooker. (3)
- 16 Stunt was frantic but French cut it short. (5)
- 18 Talbots removed little children’s clerical garb. (3)
- 20 Each exercise leads to pain. (4)
- 22 Albee sometimes captured insects. (4)
- 24 Restaurant’s first 3 ingredients provide us with one particular thing. (3)
- 25 Bras decreased radius in degrees. (3)
- 26 A necklace of flowers can be made at leisure and doesn’t require confidence. (3)



The Class of 2009 left Pomona on a note of optimism at the 156th Commencement held in May on Marston Quadrangle. Approximately 370 Sagehens received their diplomas.

Against the backdrop of the 2008 elections and the economic crisis that unfolded at the same time, President David Oxtoby evoked a passage from Malcolm Gladwell’s *The Tipping Point* to discuss the role of the individual in shaping the world. “Look for opportunities with the potential for change, think strategically about how to influence situations and build communities that will work with you to accomplish transformations,” Oxtoby said.



Senior class speaker Alix Coupet '09 talked about finding a home for himself at Pomona with the help of his peers and profes-

sors. Senior class president Julie Tate '09 also addressed the class.

The keynote address was delivered by Bob Herbert, a *New York Times* columnist who writes on politics, urban affairs and social trends. Comparing the grim economic, environmental and social hardships that the Class of 2009 faces with the “rich and flourishing landscape” that his own generation inherited, Herbert said that although the challenges are great, he recognized this generation’s potential. “I can see that we haven’t even begun to tap into the intelligence and the explosive creative energy embedded in the heart of this new generation on

the American scene,” he said. Herbert also charged the graduates to pursue their dreams while contributing to the welfare of American democracy and the American people—and to have a blast doing it. “We need to reduce the speed limits of our lives. We need to savor the trip. And paradoxically, that will give us a better grasp of how so many things have gone haywire,” he added.

Honorary degrees were awarded to Herbert, *Chicago Tribune* columnist Mary Schmich '75 and playwright/ film director Luis Valdez. The Trustees’ Medal of Merit went to Professor Frederick Sontag, whose teaching career at Pomona spanned six decades. Sontag died in June.

Adding to the aesthetic feel of the ceremony, a large art installment formed an undulating canopy overhead. Artists Jenna Didier and Oliver Hess and architectural designer Emily White designed the canopy of long streamers to shade graduates from the California sun using a complex mix of art, physics and mathematics.



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