Bringing It All Back Home
Ingrid Monson
and New Perspectives on Jazz

Harnessing the Power of Interdisciplinary Research: The Microbial Sciences Initiative and Graduate Consortium

Roundtable on Graduate Student Teaching with Susan Carey, Xiao-Li Meng, and Kay Kaufman Shelemay

Alumni Books
2 The Microbial Sciences Initiative
This exciting enterprise has sixty affiliated faculty and significant research already under way. Now a new graduate consortium will open further opportunities for GSAS students in the life sciences. See what a few collegial breakfasts will lead to!

4 New Perspectives on Jazz
With years of experience as a working jazz musician—and training in musicology and anthropology—Prof. Ingrid Monson offers new and thought-provoking interpretations of jazz, in particular, setting this quintessentially American music in its social and political context.

6 Roundtable on Graduate Student Teaching
Professors Susan Carey, psychology; Xiao-Li Meng, statistics; and Kay Kaufman Shelemay, music and African and African American Studies, discuss teaching and new initiatives undertaken by their departments to support graduate student teachers.

8 New Writing by Harvard Faculty
We excerpt works by Nancy Rosenblum, on the positive role of political parties; Ingrid Monson, on the impact of civil rights activism and African nation-building on jazz; and Steven Shapin, on the sociological realities of modern science.

10 Alumni Books
With typically extravagant variety, alumni books discuss DNA technology and identifying victims of the Bosnian war, changing gender codes in nineteenth-century Italian opera, the economic prospects of China and the Persian Gulf, and more.
Appreciating Our Graduate Student Teachers

In recent years—throughout the Faculty of Arts and Sciences—there has been increasing emphasis on the importance of good teaching. When faculty members are reviewed for promotion and tenure, teaching counts more than ever before. It also counts for students in the Graduate School. Though our students are here to develop skills in research and scholarship, teaching—and teaching fellowships—form a crucial part of the GSAS experience. Graduate student teachers play a profoundly important role at Harvard, and I’m very proud of that—both of our students and of the confidence the University has shown in them. It is essential, however, that we provide GSAS students with excellent preparation and solid support as they take on teaching responsibilities.

Such preparation represents career development in the broadest sense. For students who will be entering academia, good teaching skills are obviously a critical asset. But such skills—the ability to distill and communicate ideas, assess the work of others, lead discussions, and communicate, persuade, and think on one’s feet—are important not just to current teaching fellows or future classroom teachers, but in industry, government, nonprofit organizations, and the arts. No matter where our graduate students are headed, outstanding teaching skills will be crucial.

Although teaching experience clearly benefits GSAS students, it’s important not to stop there. Too often, we premise our discussions of graduate student teaching on the advantages that flow to teaching fellows, resident tutors, and proctors. In fact, the benefits extend in several directions, and as Dean, I want to recognize the many contributions our graduate student teachers make to the Harvard community:

- To undergraduates, these inspired young teachers bring their considerable energy and creativity. In their deep commitment to knowledge and understanding, they serve as exceptional role models for our undergraduates. Moreover, small groups are especially important settings for learning, and graduate student section leaders and tutors make such small-group learning possible.
- The faculty benefit as well, especially those teaching large lecture courses. Head teaching fellows and section leaders materially extend the faculty’s reach. In large lecture courses, section leaders articulate a professor’s ideas and communicate them to students. Section leaders are also well-placed to bring student concerns or problems to the professor's attention.
- Because they work so closely with undergraduates, graduate student teachers also serve as the eyes and ears of the University’s support services, from the Bureau of Study Counsel to University Health Services. When undergraduates have problems, teaching fellows are often among the first to know.

These are important and complex responsibilities, especially for young people new to teaching.

GSAS students are fortunate to have excellent teaching resources—in particular, the programs of the Bok Center for Teaching and Learning and teacher-training initiatives undertaken by our academic departments. You can learn more about these resources in this issue of Colloquy. (See “Teaching Matters: Support for Graduate Student Teaching,” p. 6) As Dean, I am committed to working closely with departmental directors of graduate studies to promote measures that will encourage not just good but innovative—and truly great—teaching.
THE MICROBIAL SCIENCES INITIATIVE and the Launch of a New Graduate Consortium
It began as a cozy breakfast threesome, but soon—as the MSI—the breakfast crowds grew. Here is an MSI Friday morning chalk talk.

By David Holzman

IT STARTED INFORMALLY in 2002, says Colleen Cavanaugh, PhD ’81, biology, the Edward C. Jeffrey Professor of Biology. “Richard Losick, Dan Schrag, and I were walking back from some committee meeting, lamenting how we never see each other.” And why would they? They practically inhabit different worlds. Schrag—Professor of Earth and Planetary Sciences and Environmental Science and Engineering—is a geochemist. Cavanaugh and Losick, the Maria Moors Cabot Professor of Biology, work in traditionally distant subspecialties: symbiosis and microbial development. “So we started having breakfast get-togethers once a week,” Cavanaugh continues. “That evolved into the Microbial Sciences Initiative (MSI). That expanded into chalk talks [informal presentations by MSI faculty and post-doctoral students, held on] Friday mornings.”

It was all pretty informal, though MSI received seed funding in 2004 and an operating budget two years later. Yet if its origins were ad hoc, its impact has been profound, in particular, catalyzing important interdisciplinary research. “Dozens of papers have appeared in the last two years,” says Roberto Kolter, Professor of Microbiology and Molecular Genetics and an MSI cofounder. Besides serving as a magnet for research, MSI has helped bring Harvard outstanding faculty and students, an attraction that will continue to grow following MSI’s new graduate consortium initiative. By training the next generation of researchers, MSI will not only secure Harvard’s position in microbial science, it will help drive the future of the field. Kolter also notes larger developments that helped bring MSI into existence:

First, subspecialty boundaries in microbiology have been crumbling for some time. In medicine, for example, microbes were once regarded mainly as interlopers and sources of trouble. But the human gastrointestinal tract, for example, offers a rich ecosystem of hundreds of species, many playing key roles in health. This microbial community has become a locus for research combining environmental and medical microbiology.

Second, microbes have a global presence, maintaining the soil and atmosphere and recycling nutrients in the biosphere. Yet the microbial world remains largely terra incognita, Kolter says, much like the universe before Galileo invented the telescope.

Third, microbes are ubiquitous. Not only do our bodies contain 10 times as many bacterial as human cells, microbes also thrive in other living organisms, in the water (both fresh- and saltwater), and in the soil—where they number, Cavanaugh says, roughly five billion per teaspoonful. Microbes also inhabit some of the least hospitable spots on the planet—the bubbling “hot paint pots” of Yellowstone National Park, deep in glacial ice, and up to three miles beneath the earth’s surface.

Fiercely adaptive, these organisms can withstand extremes of temperature, pressure, pH, radiation, and more. To biotechnologists, they hold out all manner of possibilities. “Bacteria are the perfect machines to [perform] all sorts of novel processes that we’re unable to figure out how to do,” says Meredith Fisher, PhD ’07, biology, a former MSI graduate student now studying at MIT’s Sloan School of Management. Potential applications include breaking down pollutants, synthesizing medicines, converting cellulose into biofuels, and manufacturing industrial chemicals.

Microbes also contribute to the Earth’s geology—for example, in rock formation and breakdown—and they played a key role in oxygenating the atmosphere several billion years ago. They may inhabit Mars and even Europa, one of Jupiter’s moons, possibly dwelling in the water believed to lie beneath a several-mile-thick surface of ice.

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She's uniquely fitted for the challenge, combining in one person a trained musicologist sensitive to the subtle nuances of rhythm and timbre, an anthropologically savvy researcher who can ground music in its cultural context, and a musician with years of experience living the professional jazz performer's life.

Jazz stood on the threshold of its second century when Monson joined the Harvard faculty in 2001. (In 1999, she was here as a visiting assistant professor.) With a dual appointment in African and African American Studies (AAAS) and the Music Department, Monson is the first member of the latter to focus on jazz and vernacular African American music. (In the 1970s and '80s, the late Eileen Southern—Harvard's first black female tenured professor—specialized in Renaissance music and African American music in both its “popular” and “serious” forms. And from 1989 to 1995, Graeme Boone, PhD '87, music, taught the department’s first Core course on jazz. But, like Southern, he was a Renaissance music scholar by training.)

Monson took a circuitous path to her scholarly calling: Her first goal was playing jazz rather than studying it. She took up the trumpet in grade school. “By
the time I was in high school,” she says, “we were playing in orchestras, and the trumpets had to count bars a lot—a lot of counting rests.” But she was fortunate in having teachers who introduced her to a wide range of music, including jazz. At first, it attracted her because the trumpeters seemed to have so much more to do. Then, she says, came a “transformation moment”—while she was listening to a recording of alto saxophonist Charlie Parker playing “Funky Blues”—when the alchemy of improvisation completely drew her in. She resolved to learn how to improvise.

Monson listened closely to trumpeters Miles Davis, Lee Morgan, Freddie Hubbard, and Booker Little, and was also inspired by musicians playing other instruments, including tenor saxophonists John Coltrane, Wayne Shorter, and Joe Henderson. She decided to attend music school and study jazz. But in the early 1980s, that wasn’t the easiest thing to do. Only three music schools in the United States then included jazz as a full-fledged part of their curricula. Two—Berklee College of Music and New England Conservatory—were in Boston. (The other, North Texas State University, was located in Denton, Texas.) Monson enrolled in New England Conservatory, where she studied with noted jazz musicians and educators, including composer George Russell and pianists Jacki Byard and Ran Blake.

During the 1980s, she lived the life of a journeyman jazz musician, playing gigs, traveling, and scuffling—but the work was by no means limited to jazz. “You find out being a musician that you’re called upon to play all kinds of music,” she says. “A friend asked me to sub for him in a salsa band that he worked with, and I ended up playing with that band for a couple of years. We did covers of a lot of really wonderful repertory from the early 1980s, Celia Cruz tunes and Willie Colon. It brought me into a cultural world I’d never seen—that I didn’t know existed. And the dancers! The dancers had the stuff. They’re unbelievable to watch.” Monson was also a founding member of the Klezmer Conservatory Band—probably best-known for its long stint on Garrison Keillor’s “Prairie Home Companion” and for reawakening interest in this lively form of Jewish dance music.

INTERESTED IN TAKING THE PULSE OF JAZZ TODAY?

Prof. Monson suggests checking out:


Brian Blade Fellowship, Season of Changes (Verve, 2008) Chris Potter, Follow the Red Line: Live at the Village Vanguard (Sunnyside, 2007)

Don Byron, Ivey-Divey (Blue Note, 2004) Maria Schneider, Concert in the Garden (Artist Share, 2004)


Klezmer music and jazz talk to each other in interesting ways, she says: “Klezmer was clearly influenced by the instrumentation of early jazz ensembles, making use of the trombone, trumpet, and drums. Improvisation is very important in klezmer music as well. And a lot of the people who played it—like other American musicians—they didn’t play just one thing. They didn’t just play klezmer music; they also played in the Benny Goodman band, [Goodman trumpeter] Ziggy Elman played klezmer music. Goodman’s ‘And the Angels Sing’ [which featured Elman] is certainly a klezmer tune.”

Ultimately, however, Monson opted to shift from player to scholar—in part, because she’d tired of the musician’s rootless life of continual touring and performing, but also because she felt she had something important to say about jazz. And jazz could certainly use the attention. Prior to the 1990s, its interpretation fell largely to amateurs, neophytes, and fans—with the notable exception of composer and musicologist Gunther Schuller, whose Early Jazz: Its Roots and Musical Development (Oxford University Press, 1968) and The Swing Era: The Development of Jazz, 1930–1945 (Oxford University Press, 1989) were pathbreaking.

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alumni notes

The Classics
Marvin L. Collier, PhD ’51, has recently published three books: Petronius Readius et Helias Tripolianensis (Mittelalterliche Studien und Texte 35, 2007), Constitutiones quae vocantur Ordinis Praemonstratensis (Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Mediaevalis 216, 2008), and Trinity College Library Dublin, Descriptive Catalogue of the Mediaeval Latin and Renaissance Manuscripts, Supplement One (Four Courts Press for Trinity College Dublin, 2008). Collier, professor of classics emeritus at the University of Virginia, launched the Dublin catalogue on May 23, 2008, with a speech opening an exhibition of medieval manuscripts at the University of Dublin.

Economics
Peter Navarro, PhD ’86, has published a revised and expanded version of his book The Coming China Wars: Where They Will Be Fought, How They Can Be Won (FT Press, 2008). Navarro is professor of economics and public policy at the Paul Merage School of Business at the University of California, Irvine.

Government
Don Nakanishi, PhD ’78, was one of five recipients of the 2008 Yale Medal, conferred by the Yale alumni association to honor outstanding service to the university. Nakanishi is Director of the University of California at Los Angeles Asian American Studies Center and has a joint faculty appointment with the Department of Asian American Studies in UCLA’s College of Letters and Sciences and with the university’s Graduate School of Education and Information Studies.

History
George H. Nash, PhD ’73, has won the 2008 Richard M. Weaver Prize, awarded annually since 1983 by the Ingalls Foundation of Rockford, Ill. Nash is author of The Conservative Intellectual Movement in America Since 1945 as well as a three-volume biography of Herbert Hoover. The award consists of a citation and a $25,000 cash award.

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Teaching Matters: Support for Graduate Student Teaching

By Susan Cassidy

This is the first in a two-part series on developing graduate-student teaching skills. In the Spring Colloquy, we’ll assay the views of current GSAS students.

—The Editor

The Graduate School is witnessing a renewed attention to pedagogy as faculty rethink institutional practices and reaffirm that, along with research and student learning, teaching matters. In the first installment of this series, Colloquy met individually with three faculty members who have been putting innovative practices in place and thinking deeply about how best to guide graduate students in becoming outstanding teachers. Our next issue will round out the discussion, exploring ideas about teaching with a group of Harvard graduate student teaching fellows.

Highlights of our faculty conversations follow—and suggest some of today’s pedagogical challenges and opportunities. Offering their perspectives are Susan Carey, the Henry A. Morss, Jr. and Elisabeth W. Morss Professor of Psychology; Xiao-Li Meng, the Whipple V.N. Jones Professor of Statistics; and Kay Kaufman Shelemay, the G. Gordon Watts Professor of Music and Professor of African and African American Studies. We spoke with them separately but present their remarks as a single conversation.

What steps have your departments taken to help graduate students become better teachers?

Meng: In the Statistics Department, everything we’ve done started with student feedback. Students came to us and said, “You guys should teach us how to teach.” We responded with Statistics 303—“The Art and Practice of Teaching Statistics.” Then students told us they needed help preparing for the PhD qualifying exam, so we designed a new course, Statistics 399—“Problem Solving in Statistics.” We also plan to design a program on how to develop a research idea into a publication and one on entering the job market. We started with a simple reaction to students’ requests, and now we have a full professional curriculum parallel to the traditional coursework.

Shelemay: The Music Department has begun a new pedagogy practicum pilot program to improve the overall quality of teaching. It’s directed, in part, at first-time teaching fellows but also to anyone with an interest in teaching. Monthly meetings focus on issues in pedagogy—effective grading, understanding evaluations and feedback, how to spark discussions—and are supplemented by individual consultations with faculty, departmental teaching fellows, and the Bok Center staff.

How easy is it to reconcile responsibilities for teaching and research?

Carey: Harvard has always been dedicated to teaching. There was a time when, at many other universities, the serious researchers were only in the graduate
faculty, but that was never true at Harvard. It’s part of the mythology of Harvard that freshmen might be taught by a Nobel Prize winner. It’s just that great researchers aren’t automatically great teachers. Some people are natural teachers, and some are not. But you can learn, and the Bok Center is there to provide help.

Shelemay: There’s a symbiotic relationship between one’s research and teaching. These aren’t separate universes. I’ve done a series of major team research projects with graduate students over the years. Most recently, I collaborated with my colleague Carol Oja [the William Powell Mason Professor of Music] on a research project on Leonard Bernstein’s Boston. We involved undergraduates and graduate students in archival and ethnographic work, and a number of major findings came out of the project. As professors, we gained enormously—both in learning about the subject and in learning how to teach across disciplinary boundaries. Your teaching can be your research.

What changes have you seen—or would you like to see—as part of this renewed commitment to teaching?

Shelemay: Good teaching begets lively classes and keeps the world interesting. But awards for teaching should receive as much acknowledgement as awards for research. As the 2006–07 Task Force on Teaching and Career Development noted in its report, Harvard is very good at publicizing every award someone wins for scholarship but not as good at acknowledging teaching awards.

Meng: It’s sinking in that we need more training for graduate students. It’s not just about training teaching fellows; it’s about career development. It doesn’t matter where you go—industry, academia, or government—good teaching skills are absolutely crucial. In my department, we started doing teaching training in 2004–05, and I recently overheard a first-year student asking a more senior student, “Is it true that we used to put up teaching fellows without any training?” As the culture changes, that’s what will gradually happen—it’ll become unthinkable not to give our graduate students this kind of preparation.

Carey: There’s now a much greater emphasis on teaching quality—that’s somewhat new. But teaching has always been very important here. That doesn’t mean Harvard values teaching in the way they do at a liberal arts college like Swarthmore. At Harvard, teaching is valued as part of a research university. What we need to do for graduate students is set up a structure for what should be a lifelong process of thinking about teaching and what’s required to do it well.

We also spoke with James Wilkinson, director of the Bok Center for Teaching and Learning, about graduate student teaching and the role of the Bok Center.

—The Editor

Celebrate the Progress That’s Been Made

“Twenty years ago,” Wilkinson says, “there was a deterministic attitude that good teachers were born and not made. But there have been major changes, and many departments now take teaching seriously in terms of either crafting a full-fledged seminar focused on graduate student teaching, or working collaboratively with the Bok Center.

“The major locus of learning to teach belongs in the departments. The Bok Center doesn’t substitute for departments but works with them. One important innovation over the past three or four years has been the departmental teaching fellows. We started with three; now we have twenty. This program is a way for us to reach more graduate students without having to spend all our time on graduate training. These train-the-trainer programs will allow us to focus more on junior and even senior faculty. We’re also about to start training department writing fellows, to help graduate students respond effectively to student writing.

“I recognize and celebrate the progress that’s been made, both by University leadership and—on the departmental level—by directors of graduate studies. But we’re a long way from understanding how to fully engage both undergraduate and graduate students in a type of learning that’s transformative—that leaves them looking at the world differently.”
“The Role of Parties in Governance”
By Nancy L. Rosenblum

Rosenblum, PhD ‘73, government, is the Senator Joseph S. Clark Professor of Ethics in Politics and Government and chair of the Department of Government.


I expect readers to be skeptical of a sympathetic theory of parties. Yet that is my challenge: to rehabilitate parties and partisanship ... By bringing opposition within the frame of government, [Hegel observed], parties do more than manage political conflict; they organize the business of government. ... Parties in opposition do more than check. They contest for office. Parties alone among political associations are “responsible.” Responsibility was Hegel’s theme. “Responsible” did not mean democratic accountability, as it would later. It meant “responsible for” rather than “to”; responsibility for the business of state. ...

An example from American political history may be helpful ... During the Civil War, the governments of the North and the South had similar formal structures, but differed fundamentally in that one was organized by party and one not. They contest for office. Parties alone among political associations are “responsible.” Responsibility was Hegel’s theme. “Responsible” did not mean democratic accountability, as it would later. It meant “responsible for” rather than “to”; responsibility for the business of state. ...

“Satchmo Speaks Out”
By Ingrid Monson

Monson is the Quincy Jones Professor of African American Music, supported by the Time Warner Endowment.

From Freedom Sounds: Civil Rights Call Out to Jazz and Africa. Copyright 2007 Oxford University Press. Published by Oxford University Press, New York City.

Outraged by the television images of white mobs and Arkansas National Guardsmen blocking the enrollment of nine African American students in Little Rock’s Central High School in September 1957, Louis Armstrong called a reporter while on tour in Grand Forks, North Dakota, then sounded off on racial injustice: “My people—the Negroes—are not looking for anything—we just want a square shake. But when I see on television and read about a crowd in Arkansas spitting and cursing at a little colored girl—I think I have a right to get sore—and say something about it.” Armstrong criticized President Eisenhower for his foot-dragging during the crisis, described Governor Orval Faubus as an “uneducated plowboy,” and withdrew in protest from a planned State Department tour of the Soviet Union. “... The way they are treating my people in the South, [he said,] the government can go to hell.” ...

Armstrong’s commentary on Little Rock links several issues: the domestic struggle for civil rights, the politics of the U.S. State Department jazz tours, and his own recent experience performing in Ghana in 1956. The trumpeter’s story encapsulates the principal task of Freedom Sounds, which is to elucidate how these three larger social forces—the civil rights movement, the cold war, and anti-colonialism—affected jazz and jazz musicians in the years between 1950, when the NAACP Legal Defense Fund began the legal battle leading to Brown v. Board of Education, and 1967, the year John Coltrane died.
... What effects, direct and indirect, did the struggle for racial equality have on aesthetics, the sense of mission musicians brought to their art, the diversity of music played and composed, and the symbolic meanings attached to the art form? What role did world affairs, especially African independence and anticolonialism, play in how African Americans came to envision their political and cultural liberation?

"'Is,' 'Ought,' and the Scientific Life"
By Steven Shapin

Shapin is the Franklin L. Ford Professor of the History of Science.

From The Scientific Life: A Moral History of a Late Modern Vocation. Copyright 2008 by the University of Chicago. Published by the University of Chicago Press, Chicago.

THE PRESENT BOOK deals ... with American industrial scientists, venture capitalists, and Organization Men: research managers at electrical and photographic firms, Southern Californian investors in high-tech companies, engineering professors trying to develop and sell intellectual property and to get ahead in their academic careers. My heroes are not, in the main, and in the usual sense of the word, heroic; if what they do changes the world—and it does—then most of their world-changing actions have a mundane character; and, throughout the twentieth century, and into the present, many external commentators seem to find their motives ignoble. ... “The old notion of the scientist as hero,” the evolutionary psychologist Steven Pinker complains, “has been replaced by the idea of scientists as amoral nerds at best.” ...

One of the keystones of official late modern thought is the distinction between the domains of the “is” and the “ought” ... Immediately after the Second World War, James Bryant Conant’s ... General Education for a Free Society ... produced a nice and confident distinction between what natural science could and could not do. The difference between the natural sciences and the humanities is just that “the former describe, analyze, and explain; the latter appraise, judge, and criticize. In the first, a statement is judged as true or false; in the second, a result is judged as good or bad. The natural sciences do not take it on themselves to evaluate the worth of what they describe.” ...

Insofar as expressions of this sort are routine formulations in and around late modern natural science culture, one cannot simply say that they are wrong. ... However, I show that the presumption of de-moralization coexists in late modernity both with contrary sentiments and with massive evidence about technoscientific practices that points to different conclusions altogether.

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History and Far Eastern Languages
Paul A. Cohen, MA ’57, Regional Studies East Asia, PhD ’61, History and Far Eastern Languages, has published Speaking to History: The Story of King Goujian in Twentieth-Century China (University of California Press, 2008). The book probes the mystery of an ancient king whose story continued to speak powerfully to millions through China’s turbulent twentieth century, but who—ironically—remains unknown to most Americans, including many specialists in the region. Cohen is an associate at Harvard’s Fairbank Center for Chinese Studies.

Linguistics
H. Craig Melchert, PhD ’77, was recently named the first A. Richard Diebold Professor of Indo-European Studies at the University of California at Los Angeles where he is also professor of linguistics. His latest monograph is A Grammar of the Hittite Language (Eisenbrauns, 2008), coauthored with Harry A. Hoffner Jr.

Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations
Michael A. Shmidman, PhD ’80, edited TURIM: Studies in Jewish History and Literature Presented to Dr. Bernard Lander, Volume Two (Touro College Press, 2008), featuring original essays on topics including medieval and modern Jewish history, biblical exegesis, rabbinic literature, and Jewish philosophy. Shmidman, the Dean and Victor J. Selmanowitz Professor of Jewish History at New York’s Touro Graduate School of Jewish Studies, also edited the first volume of TURIM (Touro College Press, 2007).

Physics
Mark P. Silverman, PhD ’73, recently published the sixth book of his experimental and theoretical researches, Quantum Superposition: Counterintuitive Consequences of Coherence, Entanglement, and Interference (Springer, 2008). This volume, detailing his work in quantum physics, greatly expands his earlier More Than One Mystery: Explorations in Quantum Interference (Springer, 1995). Silverman is professor and chair of physics at Trinity College (Hartford, Conn.). Among his other publications is A Universe of Atoms, An Atom in the Universe (Springer, 2002), on gravitation and astrophysics.

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recently received

ALUMNI BOOKS

TO KNOW WHERE HE LIES
DNA Technology and the Search for Srebrenica's Missing
By Sarah E Wagner, PhD '06, anthropology

In July 1995, more than 8,000 Bosnian Muslim men and boys were massacred and buried in mass graves in the vicinity of Srebrenica. It was Europe's worst atrocity since the Second World War. This book recounts efforts to identify their remains—using innovative DNA-based technology developed in Bosnia. The result is more than a story of scientific detection. Wagner places her narrative at the juncture of atrocity and healing, politics and morality, making clear the importance of giving victims their names—for their families and for the Bosnian community.

WHAT IS HONOR?
A Question of Moral Imperatives
By Alexander Welsh, PhD '61, English & American literature & language

Ranging from Cicero and Shakespeare to Kant and John Rawls, Welsh offers a wide-ranging meditation on the meaning and significance of “honor”—in the sense of an internalized set of standards shared among a peer group that compel or limit individual action. He concedes that this usage of the term (with its overtones of Rudyard Kipling and noblesse oblige) sounds quaint and old-fashioned, but argues that contemporary moral philosophy—in its emphasis on respect and self-respect—shows that honor remains relevant in today's world.

A FISH IN THE MOONLIGHT
Growing Up in the Bone Marrow Unit
By Sidney Homan, MA '62, PhD '65, English & American literature & language
Purdue University Press, 2008, 168 pp.

This collection offers vividly remembered stories from the author's childhood in South Philadelphia. Homan places the tales within a larger framework: They were told to pediatric cancer patients at a Florida teaching hospital, where he was artist in residence. His storytelling provides a touchstone for the young patients' own disrupted lives, encompassing sibling rivalries, adventures, fears, gross-out humor, and death. Homan is a professor of English at the University of Florida and has written numerous scholarly works and two novels. This is his first book of nonfiction stories.

A FUTURE OF CHINESE CAPITALISM
Choices and Chances
By Gordon Redding and Michael A. Witt, PhD '00, government

A concise analysis of China's potential future economic development, this work does not neglect the impact of culture, politics, and history. The authors particularly stress the catalytic role of the regional ethnic Chinese, whether living abroad (Taiwan, Singapore, etc.) or in the coastal Special Economic Zones. Enriched by specific examples and a broad, comparative approach, the book reviews current variants of capitalism—focusing on the United States, Japan, Germany, and South Korea—and weighs each as a possible model for China's economic evolution.

SALVINIA MOLESTA
By Victoria Chang, AM '93, East Asian studies

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The title poem in this collection takes its name from an invasive water fern, *Salvinia molesta* (also known as kariba weed), which has the fecund green of life but—floating on the surface and doubling in size every few days—quickly blankets bodies of water, killing the plants and fish below. Fascinated with our most paradoxical qualities, Chang coils dark and richly evocative images around difficult topics, juxtaposing atrocities and infidelities, violence and beauty.

**POPO FINANCE**

*Investment Clubs and the New Investor Populism*

By Brooke Harrington, AM ’96, PhD ’99, sociology

This book is a useful introduction to investment clubs, a social and economic phenomenon with roots in the bull market of the 1990s, in which friends or coworkers make small monthly investments in the stock market. Even after the market leveled and fell after 2000, Harrington was surprised to find that most of the clubs she studied had continued in existence—and continued their monthly investments. Though written before the latest difficulties on Wall Street, this closely observed work provides important insights.

**ONE FAMILY’S RESPONSE TO TERRORISM**

*A Daughter’s Memoir*

By Susan Kerr van de Ven, AM ’83, Middle Eastern studies, EdD ’90

Malcolm Kerr, president of the American University of Beirut, was assassinated in a 1984 terrorist attack. In this memoir, her daughter describes the family’s decision to take legal action (under the Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act of 1996). Rather than retribution, Kerr van de Ven emphasizes the need to learn the truth. Indeed, she calls for “a nonviolent response to terrorism” because anything that “adds to the spectrum of human wreckage makes no sense, even though for some it might seem impossible to resist the urge to strike back.”

**VOICING GENDER**

*Castrati, Travesti, and the Second Woman in Early Nineteenth-Century Italian Opera*

By Naomi André, PhD ’96, music

André, a GSAA Council member, begins with a deceptively simple question—“Why do heroines in opera always die?” This opens a broader interrogation of gender roles in nineteenth-century opera. André emphasizes the importance of castrati, male singers whose ethereal range and flexibility came at a profound cost. Castrati played both female and heroic male roles until falling from favor early in the century. Women then rose to prominence in such roles (travesti were women performing male roles). But by mid-century, they were losing heroic masculine roles to tenors. The book admirably gives voice to performers whose work would otherwise be lost.

**RED STATE, BLUE STATE, RICH STATE, POOR STATE**

*Why Americans Vote the Way They Do*

By Andrew Gelman, AM ’87, PhD ’90, statistics

In this readable analysis, Gelman takes on the popular cliché of “red states” versus “blue states”—noting, in particular, that while richer states tend to vote “blue” (i.e., Democratic), individual voters lean more strongly “red” (i.e., Republican), the greater their incomes. Gelman considers a wide range of factors—including economics and class; culture, social attitudes, and religion; and race and ethnicity—continued on page 13
TWO GSAS ALUMNI RECEIVE NATIONAL MEDALS OF SCIENCE

On Sept. 29, 2008, Pres. George W. Bush awarded the 2007 National Medals of Science to eight outstanding scientists of whom two—Charles Slichter (AB ’45, AM ’47, mathematics, and PhD ’49, physics) and David Wineland (AM ’71 and PhD ’71, physics)—are products of GSAS. Slichter was honored for his influential work in condensed matter physics and magnetic resonance as well as his application of resonance techniques to a broad range of theoretical and technological problems in physics and chemistry. Wineland was commended for first demonstrating the principle of laser cooling of ions (electrically charged particles or atoms) to near absolute zero. He has applied the technique to test theories in quantum physics; it has also led to the development of laser-cooled atomic clocks, the current state of the art in time and frequency standards.

FAUST, BIDART NOMINATED FOR NATIONAL BOOK AWARDS

Two authors with GSAS ties were among the finalists for the National Book Award, one of the highest literary honors in the United States. Drew Faust, Harvard University President and Lincoln Professor of History, was nominated for This Republic of Suffering: Death and the American Civil War (Alfred A. Knopf), which describes how the war’s staggering loss of life transformed Americans’ views of death. It is her sixth book. Her earlier Mothers of Invention: Women of the Slaveholding South in the American Civil War (1996) received the Francis Parkman Prize and the Avery Craven Prize. Frank Bidart, AM ’67, English and American Literature and Language, was nominated in the poetry category for Watching the Spring Festival (Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2008). Bidart, a professor of English at Wellesley College, won the 2007 Bollingen Prize in American Poetry. One of his previous works, Desire (1997), was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize and was a finalist for both the National Book Award and the National Book Critic’s Circle Award. Annette Gordon-Reed, JD ’84, was a third finalist with Harvard ties, nominated in the nonfiction category for The Hemingses of Monticello: An American Family, a history of an American slave family owned by Thomas Jefferson.

GSAS ALUMNUS WINS MACARTHUR “GENIUS” AWARD

Adam Riess, AM PhD ’96, astronomy, has been named a 2008 MacArthur Fellow. Riess, a professor of physics and astronomy at Johns Hopkins University, was recognized for groundbreaking research showing that the universe isn’t just expanding—its expansion is accelerating. To do so, he and his colleagues measured distant supernovas, comparing their relative brightness (revealing their distance) and shifts to the red end of their spectra (revealing velocities). This finding has important ramifications for cosmology and other areas of theoretical physics. Riess has headed efforts to use the Hubble Space Telescope in gathering more precise data on this phenomenon. He’s also engaged in experiments to detect “dark energy”—a counterpart to the theoretical (and similarly undetectable) “dark matter”—which may be the main force behind the cosmic acceleration. Other 2008 MacArthur Fellows with Harvard ties include Rachel Wilson, AB ’96, an assistant professor of neurobiology at the Medical School, and Wafaa El-Sadr, MPA ’96, director of the International Center for AIDS Care and Treatment Programs and the Center for Infectious Disease Epidemiologic Research at Columbia University’s Mailman School of Public Health. The Fellowships, established by John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur, provide $500,000 over five years, “no strings attached,” to encourage Fellows to pursue their own intellectual and creative goals.
to help us move from the shorthand of the political pundits to a fuller understanding of today’s often contentious political landscape.  

**DUBAI & CO.**

**Global Strategies for Doing Business in the Gulf States**

By Aamir A. Rehman, AB ’99, AM ’99, Middle Eastern Studies, MBA ’04


The author, an expert corporate strategist, reviews economic opportunities in the Persian Gulf states, from vast Saudi Arabia to tiny Bahrain (roughly one-sixth the size of Rhode Island). This readable account—focused on practical lessons and replete with case studies—locates the region in history and culture. Rehman notes areas of continuing concern—including double-digit unemployment in several states and the poor treatment of foreign workers (especially those who are neither Arab nor white). He also addresses misconceptions, e.g., that women have little role as consumers.

**W** **A** **R** **O** **F** **A** **T** **H** **O** **U** **S** **D** **E** **S** **E** **R** **T** **S**

**Indian Raids and the U.S.-Mexican War**

By Brian DeLay, PhD ’04, history


This sharply observed and well-written history reevaluates the role of mid-nineteenth-century “Indian raiding” in the Southwest and the northern Mexican states, describing an epic and complex struggle that involved Mexico, the United States, the nascent Republic of Texas, and a range of indigenous peoples. DeLay compellingly argues that raiding by native groups, especially the Comanche, “continued to shape the international contest for North America even into the mid-nineteenth century”—disrupting northern Mexico, sharpening the young nation’s political divisions, and leaving it vulnerable to US intervention in 1846.

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**NIH AWARDS $6.5 MILLION TO HARVARD SCIENTISTS FOR NANOPORE RESEARCH**

Harvard scientists Daniel Branton, Higgins Professor of Biology, Emeritus, and Jene Golovchenko, Rumford Professor of Physics and Gordon McKay Professor of Applied Physics, in the Department of Physics and the School of Engineering and Applied Sciences, have received a $6.5 million NIH grant to fund research by their Nanopore Group on DNA sequencing. Nanopores are very small holes (about two nanometers in diameter). One of their intriguing properties is the ability to recognize individual molecules, for example, DNA bases, potentially allowing more accurate—and dramatically faster—DNA sequencing. The NIH grant, to be distributed over four years, follows the finalizing of an alliance between the Nanopore Group and the British firm Oxford Nanopore Technologies. The Harvard Office of Technology Development reached a formal licensing and funding agreement with Oxford Nanopore Technologies in August.

—Compiled by James Clyde Sellman

**Authors:** GSAS alumni who have published (as author or editor) a general interest book (no textbooks, reprints, or revised editions, please) within the past year and would like it to be considered for inclusion in Alumni Books should send a copy of the book to: Colloquy, Harvard Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, Holyoke Center 350, 1350 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, MA 02138-3846. Questions? E-mail gsaa@fas.harvard.edu.
MINIMIZING INSTITUTIONAL CONSTRAINTS

Organizationally, MSI is an interfaculty initiative, not a department—it’s a relatively unstructured community of nearly sixty faculty members. MSI’s loose-limbed organization provides rich opportunities for these faculty members (and their undergraduate and graduate students and postdoctoral fellows) to carry out cross-school and cross-departmental microbial research. MSI’s force is thus both centrifugal (reaching outward across disciplines, beyond divisions and schools) and magnetic (drawing compatible elements toward a common center).

Participating faculty members currently hail from the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, the Medical School, and the School of Public Health, including experts in population genetics and evolution, paleobiology, environmental chemistry, experimental evolution, biogeochemistry, astrobiology, synthetic biology, enzymology, quantitative modeling, and engineering. According to Cavanaugh, MSI has already made it easier to attract promising new faculty. In particular, she mentions Christopher Marx, Peter Girgius, and fungal biologist Anne Pringle in the Department of Organismic and Evolutionary Biology and Colleen Hansel at the School of Engineering and Applied Sciences.

LAUNCHING A GRADUATE CONSORTIUM FOR THE MICROBIAL SCIENCES

Under Cavanaugh and Kolter’s energetic leadership—and in keeping with the adaptive organisms they study—the MSI faculty will soon offer a new research opportunity for PhD students interested in microbial sciences. The Graduate Consortium for Studies in Microbial Sciences will formally commence this fall and will foster a University-wide scholarly community united by participation in MSI courses and activities and shared interest in combining the disciplines and methods that promise to advance our understanding of microbial systems. The Consortium is not a new degree program; it’s a structured research “cluster” open to enrolled Harvard PhD and DSc students who have completed at least one term in their home departments. Participating students are expected to retain primary affiliations with their home programs.

Several mechanisms will encourage interconnections among students, professors, and all manner of ideas. MSI Consortium activities will include informal weekly discussions, Friday breakfasts, a monthly seminar series, a summer journal club, and an annual symposium. (The next will be April 18, 2009. For more information, see www.msi.harvard.edu.) Consortium members will also take “full-immersion” microbial sciences workshops during Harvard’s January session. “A Microbial World,” an interdisciplinary course taught each spring term, will serve as the MSI Consortium’s required “core” class, and all MSI students are expected to complete it some time during their graduate career. In addition, many elective courses across the University cover various aspects of microbial sciences. In the spirit of flexibility, these activities and courses will be accessible to all affiliated Consortium participants regardless of their year in graduate school.

Professor Kolter says, “We’re very excited by the startup of the Microbial Sciences Initiative’s newest component, which in many ways is a logical next step in our activities. Our Consortium’s graduate students will bring new ideas and innovative work to us, and we’re looking forward to their contributions. We’re also optimistic that their research will be enriched as they interact with their peers in this vibrant environment.”

CATALYZING INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH

MSI’s intellectual openness is already bringing results, Cavanaugh declares, and she speaks from experience. “Because of MSI, I had the opportunity to attend medical microbiology lectures,” she says. At one, the subject was cystic fibrosis (CF),
a genetic disease that typically kills its victims in early adulthood. CF prevents the lungs from clearing mucous, resulting in a “warm, rich, humid, organic environment.” When she heard that, Cavanaugh recalls thinking, “That’s got to support a microbial zoo.”

But she was “somewhat shocked to hear the professor introduce the four or five main opportunistic pathogens you culture from a cystic fibrosis lung” as if that were the complete list of species populating this fecund niche. Through contacts offered by MSI, she teamed up with Stephen Lory, in the Medical School’s Department of Microbiology and Molecular Genetics, and a post-doc they acquired jointly. The three commenced research on the microbial population of the CF lung. They found ten to fifteen additional species using polymerase chain reaction, a DNA-sequencing technique, then turned to a more powerful technique, 454 pyrosequencing, which revealed more than sixty genera, some of which were as prevalent as traditionally recognized bacteria.

“Clinical treatment is geared towards the organisms they can culture,” Cavanaugh explains. But we can only culture about 0.1% of all microbial species. In the case of cystic fibrosis, she says, “the pathology may be due to these other [previously unrecognized] species or to synergisms among them.” In short, her research may lead to more effective adjuvant treatments.

PROBING THE FRONTIERS OF GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE

Another line of MSI-grounded research may further our understanding of global climate disruption. During her PhD studies, Rebecca Case identified bacteria that were killing algae off the coast of Australia. The killing correlated with temperature, peaking in the summer. Some results were obvious, such as the death and bleaching of coral reefs. (Coral cannot survive without symbiotic algae.) But Case, now a Ziff Fellow at the Harvard University Center for the Environment (HUCE), was also aware of the Gaia hypothesis, which holds that the biosphere is a living organism in its own right, with its own control mechanisms and feedback loops. One, for example, is thought to involve the volatile sulfur compound dimethylsulfoniopropionate, known as DMSP. DMSP is given off by algae and floats into the atmosphere, where it seeds clouds. According to the Gaia hypothesis, it should mitigate global warming because increased temperatures would produce more algae—and more DMSP—resulting in additional cloud cover that would reflect more incoming sunlight back into space. (This process is thought to be capable of reducing the Earth’s average temperature by more than 3° C.) But DMSP also attracts the lethal bacteria.

While still a graduate student, Case feared that the killing of algae by bacteria was reducing the quantity of DMSP released skyward. She met Kolter at a conference, and quickly “realized he thinks like I do, on a big-picture scale.” She wrote to him about her idea, and in reply, he mentioned that his MSI friend and colleague Schrag (the director of HUCE), does climate-modeling. Case obtained a fellowship to work with Kolter and Schrag and is now testing her hypothesis in the waters off Hawaii and Antarctica.

“There are very few universities where a climate person will be a great friend and collaborator with a molecular geneticist,” Case observes. If there’s a moral here, it’s this: We often hear that “good fences make good neighbors,” but for great science (and great friendships), stick to building bridges. In the sciences, MSI clearly exemplifies this creative, bridge-building approach.

David Holzman writes regularly for Colloquy. He lives in Lexington, Mass.
On the other hand, writers from F. Scott Fitzgerald to Jack Kerouac, Norman Mailer, and beyond have used jazz as metaphor or cultural trope—seeing it as an antic release from straitlaced social conventions, a cool mask of apolitical detachment, or a mirror for self-analysis. Fans and aficionados—such as documentarian Ken Burns—have preferred a heroic narrative highlighting the individual greats (including Louis Armstrong, Duke Ellington, Parker, and Coltrane) who propelled the music forward. Forward is the operative term: Such interpretations generally present a story of creative advances and, despite occasional setbacks and sidetracks, the triumphant scaling of ever-loftier musical peaks.

Monson takes a very different approach. After completing graduate studies at New York University, she published *Saying Something: Jazz Improvisation and Interaction* (University of Chicago Press, 1997), which counters this heroic model by examining the role of the rhythm section (typically made up of piano, bass, and drums). To understand jazz, she argues, one shouldn’t stop with the individual soloist, no matter how brilliant or creative. Jazz is less a lecture than a lively, open-ended conversation. Through a series of in-depth musician interviews and incisive musical analyses, she underscores the rhythm section’s collaborative interplay and its “community-building” role within the jazz ensemble.

Her latest book, *Freedom Sounds: Civil Rights Call Out to Jazz and Africa* (Oxford University Press, 2007), reflects another of her main concerns, connecting jazz to broader political and social currents. In the book, she explores the impact of the Civil Rights Movement, cold war politics, and nation-building in Africa on jazz musicians of the 1950s and ’60s. (For an excerpt, see “New Writing by Harvard Faculty,” p.8.) And she describes how jazz musicians could find themselves embroiled in political controversies—often not of their own choosing.

During the 1950s, Ellington, Armstrong, and Nat King Cole each took heat in the black press because they performed before segregated audiences when touring the South. On the other hand, trumpeter Dizzy Gillespie ran afoul of U.S. embassy officials in Ankara, Turkey, while leading a big band on the first of the era’s high-profile, State Department-sponsored jazz tours. Gillespie refused to take part in a jam session organized to entertain the local elite unless a group of poor youngsters who’d gathered outside the gates were also admitted—reportedly remarking, “Man, we’re here to play for all the people.” Though the ambassador “hemmed and hawed,” he ultimately gave in. By the start of the 1960s, some jazz musicians were bringing politics into their music in far more overt and programmatic ways, exemplified by drummer Max Roach’s *We Insist! Max Roach’s Freedom Now Suite* (Candid, 1960), the album’s cover photograph showing three black men seated in a diner, evoking the sit-ins that had begun earlier that year in Greensboro, N.C.

And where might Ingrid Monson’s wide-ranging interests take her next? Currently, she’s at work on a biography of Malian musician Neba Solo, a virtuoso of the balafon, an African instrument resembling the marimba and xylophone. (Monson keeps a gleaming wooden balafon close at hand in her Paine Hall office.) The music of Mali is of particular interest from a jazz standpoint, she says. And this spring, she’ll unleash Aretha Franklin, Funkadelic, and James Brown on Harvard’s hallowed halls as part of her course “Rhythm and Blues, Soul, and Funk.”

James Clyde Sellman, PhD ’93, history, writes on music and other topics. He has copyedited *Colloquy* for several years and, for the current issue, served as guest editor.

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**Charitable IRA Rollover Returns—A Tax-free Gift to Harvard**

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The uneven topography of the land required deliberate, careful walking at 100-meter intervals, with one field researcher covering the ridge tops, another on the slopes, and one more in drainage bottoms. As Emily Hammer and her colleagues meticulously recorded landscape features, they discovered more than the six-person survey team could have hoped for: dozens of campsites and other features—cisterns, corrals, and cairns—attesting to hundreds if not thousands of years of nomadic pastoralist inhabitation.

“Since the presence of ancient nomadic pastoralists is typically inferred from historical sources and voids in urban settlement patterns, it’s really exciting to be able to record empirical data on their campsites, cisterns, and grazing areas,” says Hammer, a third-year anthropology student who has completed several Middle Eastern field projects in the last three years. While archaeology has traditionally focused on urban centers, Hammer’s interest lies in exploring evidence of rural, nomadic peoples from a variety of historical periods in Turkey’s sparsely populated southeast region in Northern Mesopotamia.

Nomadic pastoralists are small groups whose economy revolves around domesticated sheep and goats; they move seasonally to areas where their animals can find the most abundant grazing land. Although an integral part of the social and political history of the Middle East, these groups have proven a challenge to archaeological study because they left neither permanent settlements nor a body of written records.

Hammer relishes the opportunity to study the artifacts of this almost-lost population whose current way of life verges on extinction. “Nomadic pastoralists represent a population likely to slip through the cracks of historical reconstruction but who often turn out to be crucial in social processes,” says Hammer. Turkey’s Diyarbakir Province, home principally to Kurds, provides the ideal landscape for surveying premodern campsites. Hammer’s studies are filled with a sense of urgency—the Ilisu Dam, scheduled for completion in 2012, will likely submerge important archeological sites in the region.

The successful identification of sites depends on the survey techniques employed—an area of competency for Hammer, who double-majored in math and archaeology. “Emily has expertise in the use of Geographic Information Systems, which involve digitally based mapping and spatial analysis, and in the use of satellite imagery and aerial photography,” says her advisor, Assistant Professor of Anthropology Jason Alik Ur.

For most GSAS students, the academic year is dedicated to coursework, teaching, and processing data, while summer remains a critical time for on-the-ground research, often requiring travel. For Hammer, this three-month period allows her to put both her math and archeological skills to work in the field. Before 2007, summer funding for students was guaranteed for only two years. Now that that support has been extended to four, GSAS students across disciplines are transforming their summers into periods of high productivity, without financial concerns. “My goal is to understand past human behavior through the study of spatial relationships among artifacts, structures, and sites,” says Hammer, who enjoys conducting research while living a rustic existence in villages with few modern amenities. “With the generous support of GSAS summer funding, I was able to collect significant data that I’m now processing and presenting.”

In addition to her historical findings, Hammer was thrilled to discover modern campsites used just last winter—evidence that nomadic pastoralists still seasonally occupy the area. She plans to return to this “Cradle of Civilization” to interview them, and she hopes to learn more about their history, as well as gain insight into the current political tensions nomadic pastoralists experience with modern Turkey.
Alumni Events and Notices
For more information about any of the following events, e-mail gsaa@fas.harvard.edu or call the Graduate School's Office of Alumni Relations at 617-495-5591.

SAVE THE DATES—ALUMNI WEEKEND

Middle Eastern Studies Graduate Alumni Reunion
Friday, April 3, 2009 | Cambridge, Massachusetts

GSAS Alumni Day
Saturday, April 4, 2009 | Cambridge, Massachusetts

Check the GSAS website (www.gsas.harvard.edu) under Alumni for details as these events near, or e-mail gsaa@fas.harvard.edu.

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