

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

CLA Today

College of Liberal Arts

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Beyond and behind
words and images

Contents

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College of Liberal Arts

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Affirming core values

"Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire."—*William Butler Yeats*

Thank you for your outpouring of support last spring on behalf of the University's request for funding. Your letters, e-mails, and phone calls to members of the Minnesota Legislature helped make a compelling case for the University of Minnesota and its many contributions to the quality of life we value so highly.

The legislature came through with a budget that exceeded the governor's recommendation but still fell far short of what the University needs to remain one of our nation's great institutions of higher education. The budget shortfall has necessitated both a large tuition increase and substantial and strategic budget cuts to protect the high caliber of our faculty and the quality of the educational experience we provide our students.

The fever pitch of the discussions surrounding the request told us that the relationship between education and government has changed dramatically in Minnesota, a state known historically for its largesse toward higher education. And the clamor for immediate outcomes and bottom lines suggests that the general public may have lost sight of the value of universities—especially, of liberal education—in their lives.

Universities do have a responsibility, of course, to help prepare students for work in a competitive economy. And universities do have a huge economic impact on their states. But economic and workforce development are by-products of universities excelling at what they do best: basic research, liberal education, and the dissemination of knowledge.

At the core of a university education is a liberal education—an education that encourages students to think critically and creatively; that gives students an interdisciplinary understanding of the ideas that shape the physical, social, cultural, economic, and political world in which they live; that enables students to see the connections among seemingly disparate things; and that equips them to be lifelong learners.

A liberal education provides students with the intellectual base and the skills they will need to negotiate the many changes they will inevitably experience in their lifetimes, including changes that may move them into careers that don't even exist today. It prepares students to expect the unexpected, embrace change, and be comfortable with ambiguity.

It teaches them to be flexible and versatile. It provides not a toolbox of specialized skills that could be obsolete tomorrow, but rather a broad understanding

of math, science, and technology, as well as of culture, history, language, economics, and philosophy. A liberal education provides the basis for achievement in every field of human endeavor, from building businesses to building communities, from making policy to making music, from managing people to managing information.

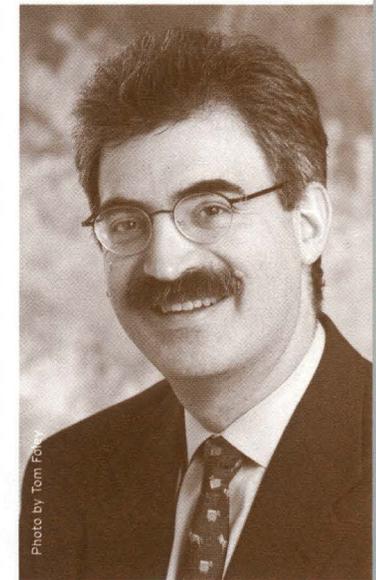
A liberal education prepares graduates to push the boundaries of knowledge, to improvise when old formulas fail, to take imaginative leaps beyond conventional wisdom and to act on fresh ideas in powerful, transformative ways.

The future belongs to people with the knowledge, imagination, dexterity, and insight to recognize and seize new opportunities. It will be shaped by people who can move with agility through a complex world of ideas, cultures, languages, and the sciences.

We have entered a century that requires more than ever the ideas and creativity, the broad knowledge and diverse skills, and the flexibility, resourcefulness, and intellectual agility provided by a liberal education. More than ever, we must provide our students with the kind of education they need to participate in a dynamic global economy and increasingly diverse world.

By investing in a liberal education, we produce graduates with the broad set of skills needed for an ever-changing workforce. By investing in liberal education, we produce graduates capable of solving the challenging social, political, and economic issues that we confront as a society. We produce citizens who can bridge the deep divides that threaten to tear our communities apart. And we produce citizens whose minds have been opened to multiple points of view and who are prepared to engage in thoughtful debate and to evaluate alternative arguments and proposals.

As you read the stories about our students, faculty, and alumni, you will see some of the ways in which CLA is providing an education that enables our graduates to make enduring contributions to our state and nation. With your continued support, CLA will continue to meet this ambitious goal.



Dean Steven J. Rosenstone

front cover: Haidee Sisson, assistant professor of cultural studies and comparative literature, surrounded by classic cars in a Minneapolis auto store.

Photo: Diana Watters

Photo left: Women from the class of '49 take a final stroll on Athrop Mall.

Courtesy of University of Minnesota Archives

From cold type to digital images:

CLA SCHOLARS ON COMMUNICATING

Barely 15 years ago, I became a bona fide "user" of digital technology—no longer a mere writer-editor but a processor of words and images. I had received my first "personal computer."

The closest I had ever come to a computer was a class entry permit, a data-encoded punch card that verified my University course registration. And so I was mystified, especially by the mouse. This device, I quickly discovered, had a mind of its own as it sent the cursor skittering across the screen.

What my colleagues and I didn't realize was that this was just the beginning of a revolution in the way we would do our jobs as writers and editors. We would

one day not only replace typing with "keyboarding," but become part of an evolving "electronic publishing" industry that would put typesetters and layout artists out of business.

No more t-squares or rubber cement. No more carbon paper, erasers, or white-out. In this new world, everything would happen electronically, with binary logic. Paper was "hard copy." Words were digital ciphers that could disappear into cyberspace with a click-and-delete.

It was sometimes a struggle—we had to develop not only a whole new set of cyberskills but also a new world view, not to mention a new vocabulary. But the revolution doesn't even feel like a revolution any more, because we're in it. Computers are us.

Today's students know intimately the virtual world first brought to our desktops such a relatively short time ago. E-words pepper the vernacular. We commune in cozy chat rooms, drop purchases into virtual shopping carts, and observe rules of e-mail "netiquette."

We have at our fingertips a cyberworld of "information," its content heavily commercial and governed piecemeal by an emerging body of ad hoc cyber-laws.

Meanwhile, faculty across the college are taking a close look at the culture the revolution has wrought, where and how it began, and where it is going. They are looking through new lenses at how we communicate.

Viva la revolution.—Eugenia Smith, ed.

The reel thing: Wasson on film

by Eugenia Smith



Haidee Wasson

Photo by Diana Watters

An unapologetic consumer and aficionado of popular culture, Haidee Wasson is "not ashamed to admit" that she'd just as soon watch "Buffy the Vampire Slayer" as read Proust.

Yet Wasson, a new faculty member in the Department of Cultural Studies and Comparative Literature (CSCL), doesn't watch TV the way the rest of us do. She reads it, and so do her students.

Bringing to bear her vast knowledge of visual culture—including TV, film, and video—Wasson is working with CSCL professor John Mowitz and others to build a new major, Studies in Cinema and Media Culture, which she says will take students on an intellectual tour through a rich media archive—the images, technologies, and political strategies that constitute contemporary media culture.

HAIDEE WASSON

Education

- Ph.D. '99, McGill U, Montreal
- M.A. '94, communications, McGill U
- B.A. '92, English, film and communications, McGill U

Professional history

- 2000- assistant professor, cultural studies and comparative literature
- 1999 Visiting assistant professor of multimedia, Communications and Media Arts, Marist College, NY
- 1996 Faculty lecturer, History of Visual Technologies, McGill U, Montreal

Selected publications

- "Some Kind of Racket: The Museum of Modern Art, Hollywood, and the Problem of Film Art, 1935," *Canadian Journal of Film Studies* 9:1 (spring 2000).
- "Eyewitness History: New Technologies and the Production of Visual Evidence," with Janine Marchessault, *Convergences: Journal Research into New Media Technologies* 4:3 (fall 1998).

Work in progress

- "Modern Ideas/ Old Films: The Museum of Modern Art's Film Library and Film Culture, 1935-39" (forthcoming book)

Wasson has spent much of her time as a scholar digging through the dusty film archives of New York's Museum of Modern Art, whose collections shine a floodlight over a broad sweep of 20th century culture, from Mondrian to Mickey Mouse, nick-elopeons to multiplexes.

For Wasson the visual culture historian, all media are worthy objects of study—art films and B movies, thrillers and horror flicks, classic dramas, commercials, Web pages. Indeed, she says, “Truthfully, I will watch anything once. Teen movies, action flicks, vintage instructional shorts, silent German expressionist films.”

An equal opportunity cultural critic, Wasson gleefully takes on the hierarchies of value that pit “high” culture against “low” and elevate critics of certain tastes and sensibilities to connoisseur status. Challenging the notion that any form of cultural expression is inherently better than any other, she notes that such highbrow terms as “art film” are “as much products of industry marketing campaigns as designators of a high-minded political or aesthetic practices.”

Especially in the academy, words such as “culture” and “art” have acquired the force of moral and aesthetic imperatives. That’s why, says Wasson, when we watch TV, we think we *should* be reading.

“The academy has always privileged the written word as the highest form of cultural expression,” says Wasson. “But why revere books and not film or video?”

Windows on the cultural landscape

Wasson comes by her scholarly niche quite naturally. As a kid growing up in Canada, she spent much of her time in “three favorite places: the shopping mall, the movie theater, and that precious piece of floor directly in front of the television.”

At local movie houses, she gobbled up cinema culture like popcorn, viewing the world beyond her home town through the eyes of Steven Spielberg and George Lukas, not to mention Yoda, Darth Vader, and E. T.

Bringing to her classrooms a mind brimming with provocative and intellectually edgy ideas, today Wasson challenges her students to view film and TV with a critical mind’s eye—and through a wide-angle lens—as windows on culture. Film study in the 21st century, she says, “requires a cross-media approach. Films are complex

cultural objects. The dedicated cinephile sitting in the cinema watching Godard or Hitchcock or Capra with studied detachment is no longer the ego-ideal of the discipline.”

In her article “Assassinating an Image: The Strange Life of Kennedy’s Death,” Wasson examines nearly four decades of media scrutiny of one very complex cultural object, the Zapruder footage of the Kennedy assassination. Thanks to relentless media replays of the events of November 22, 1963, even people not yet born then feel as if they were there to witness the assassination and its aftermath.

This sense of immediacy, of immersion in the historical moment, says Wasson, raises “interesting questions about the relationship of images to politics and history—the way in which images fasten themselves to cultural memories, irretrievably shaping” how such events are understood.

“These images have been endlessly reinterpreted, reframed, reshot, manipulated, and now digitized,” says Wasson. “What’s especially interesting is the tension between, on the one hand, their ostensibly indisputable value as evidence of that moment, and their equally indisputable value as shapers of myth and ritual.

“The images themselves, as records of an event, mean less and less. The rhetorical and institutional shaping of those images is everything.”

Thumbs up, thumbs down

Challenging the “appreciation model of media study,” Wasson says the goal of her film classes is not to assess “artistic merit” but to examine the culture of film and film making: “We are not here (in the words of a colleague) to teach the ‘thumbs-up, thumbs-down’ theory of culture.”

Yet, says Wasson, we also must understand why we like or do not like something, in part to let ourselves off moralistic and aestheticist hooks. It is crucial, she argues, to develop intellectually rich models for understanding the “politics of pure pleasure”—so that, for example, we can give ourselves permission to like Julia Roberts “while also believing, perhaps, that the movie ‘Pretty Woman’ is a reactionary

attack on women in the workplace.”

In the final analysis, what’s important about a film is “what kinds of dialogue it evokes,” says Wasson. “Why was it created? Whose interests are served? What are its politics?”

In the larger sweep of history, she asks, “What’s the relationship between Karl Marx and Britney Spears? Sigmund Freud and Ricky Martin? Bertolt Brecht and Bugs Bunny? Henry Ford and James Cameron or Spike Lee? These are not trivial questions. They are the questions that really matter.”

Indeed, says Wasson, such questions are at the core of a liberal education. “Education should be a compelling invitation to complex thinking,” she says. “[As academics,] we have a responsibility to challenge our students to

expand and think about the world around them; to navigate ambivalence; to ask questions about the relationship between the world as they know it and the world as understood by others.”

Toward the end of the interview, a student stops by and greets Wasson as if she’s an old and dear friend, then turns to tell me what an “amazing” teacher Wasson is. That verdict is confirmed by Wasson’s teaching evaluations: her students give her nearly perfect scores.

The admiration is mutual. As her student disappears into the crowded coffee shop, Wasson exclaims, “There goes one of the reasons I love teaching.”

“The academy has always privileged the written word as the highest form of cultural expression. But why revere books and not film or video?”

“The more elaborate our means of communication, the less we communicate.”

—Joseph Priestley, 18th century chemist, political theorist, theologian

There's **M**ore to seeing than meets the eye

by Jessica Breed & Eugenia Smith

DAN KERSTEN

Education

- Ph.D. '83 psychology, U of M
- M.S. '78 mathematics, U of M
- S.B. '76 mathematics, M.I.T.

Professional history

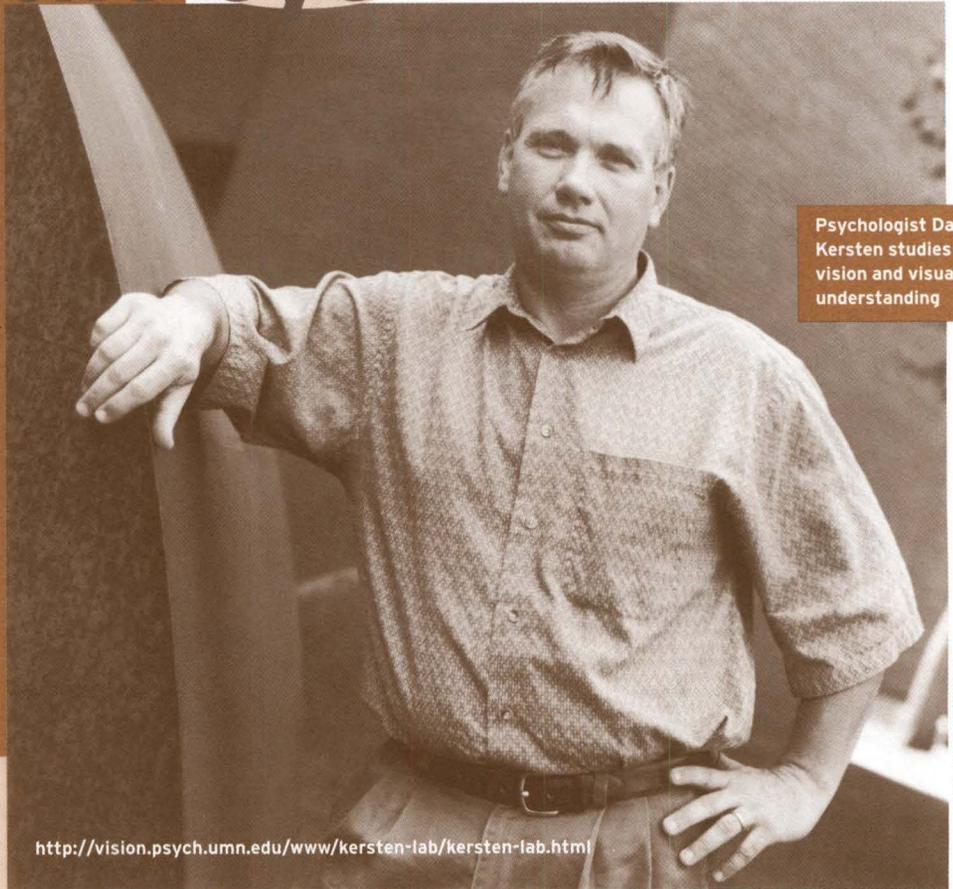
- 1989-present, U of M psychology
- 1993-94 visiting professor, Max Planck Institute for Biological Cybernetics, Tübingen, Germany
- 1988 visiting scientist, Department of Brain and Cognitive Sciences, M.I.T.
- 1984-89 assistant professor, Brown U

Selected publications

- "Perception of three-dimensional shape influences colour perception via mutual illumination," *Nature* (1999)
- "Viewpoint dependent recognition of familiar faces," *Perception* (1999)

Special joy

- Hiking in the mountains



Psychologist Dan Kersten studies vision and visual understanding

<http://vision.psych.umn.edu/www/kersten-lab/kersten-lab.html>

Photo by Diana Watters

Communicating with images is as effortless as clicking a mouse; yet scientists are just beginning to understand what "seeing" actually is and how the human brain registers and interprets the visible world.

"It wasn't until the 1960s and 70s, when computer scientists were trying to give robots the ability to see, that we discovered that useful information about the world could not be obtained by simple measurements of image intensities," says Dan Kersten, professor of psychology and renowned vision researcher.

They discovered through computer-simulations that vision required much more than passive photographic scanning. Seeing was more like a cognitive process, as sophisticated as speaking or reading. Robots could register shapes, lines, and variegations of light and dark, but is that really seeing?

Vision, says Kersten, is a way of "reading" a stream of information from the physical environment. Most of us easily and instantly can "read" a coworker's face or distinguish a

parked car from a moving one. But this process of recognition, while instantaneous, requires very complex brain activity, no less than does the subsequent action of greeting or getting out of the way. Up to half of the brain may be used for vision, says Kersten, adding, "If we understand vision and its underlying principles, we will go a long way towards understanding how the brain works."

"If we understand vision and the principles that underlie vision, we will go a long way towards understanding how the brain works."

With his colleagues in vision research, Kersten is seeking answers to questions that philosophers have asked for centuries: What is seeing? How are seeing and knowing related? If we both look at an object, do we see the same thing? How do we share the experience of seeing and communicate what we see?

"Early vision" researchers study the range of retinal perception—how small a change in brightness or movement we are

able to detect. Those studying "high level vision" look at how we make decisions and judgments about visual information—for example, how we "read" environmental cues such as facial expressions or navigate through rush-hour traffic.

"Middle vision" researchers such as Kersten connect the objective sensory data to larger conceptual processes like object and pattern recognition. Using computer animation, MRI scanners, and robotic simulations as well as human subjects, Kersten studies what the brain is doing while the eye is receiving images—how the brain translates seeing into recognition and meaning.

Kersten and his colleagues have discovered that the brain can register and process significant amounts of information that escape our awareness—and so, in a sense, we don't really see what our brains see. The brain may take in data from across an entire landscape, while the conscious mind may register awareness of only a portion of the scene—say, a grove of trees or a flock of birds.

The human brain makes unconscious calculations about such data as shape, color, shadow, and dimensionality much as it does for other cognitive processes like constructing sentences. While we may be unable to articulate the rules of grammar or the physics of vision, we may speak and see with great proficiency. Our brains know the rules, understand the physics.

But we also can trick our brains. We can transform a two-dimensional figure into a three-dimensional image simply by reconceptualizing it. (See Figure 1.)

An avid painter, Kersten says that to understand how we create art is to unravel one of the great mysteries of cognitive science: How do we represent on paper or canvas our knowledge of an object? “We have a lot of

implicit knowledge, and it’s a great challenge to make it explicit,” he says. Although we all have the ability to recognize faces, translating the “information” we have—nose,

mouth, eyebrows—into a recognizable portrait is difficult at best, in part because we don’t really know just what makes a face recognizable—or, for that matter, what allows us to see a face from entirely different

angles and know it’s the same face. “At best,” says Kersten, “we can tell when the painted representation ‘looks right.’”

Indeed, there is “a sense in which painting reverses the process of perception,” says Kersten. Rather than beginning with a retinal image and constructing a three-dimensional scene in our mind’s eye, we begin with

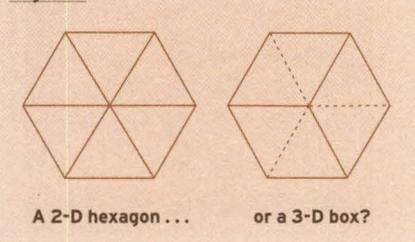
the memory or “conception” of the scene and render it as a two-dimensional image on canvas.

Kersten’s studies in vision have important long-term implications for visual communication as well as for medicine, robotics, engineering, and computer graphics—the field that makes possible much of Kersten’s work. But a full understanding of how the brain processes visual information can take years. Recently while studying a 3D object computer-generated by another researcher, Kersten remarked to students in the lab, “I’m sort of discouraged. Ten years ago I thought we would have solved this problem by now.”

“You may be discouraged,” one student responded, “but we’re glad, because it gives us a challenging problem to work on.” “That’s what makes this work exciting,” says Kersten, smiling.

“There will always be challenges.”

Figure 1



C is for Crain:

by Eugenia Smith

Mapping the ABCs

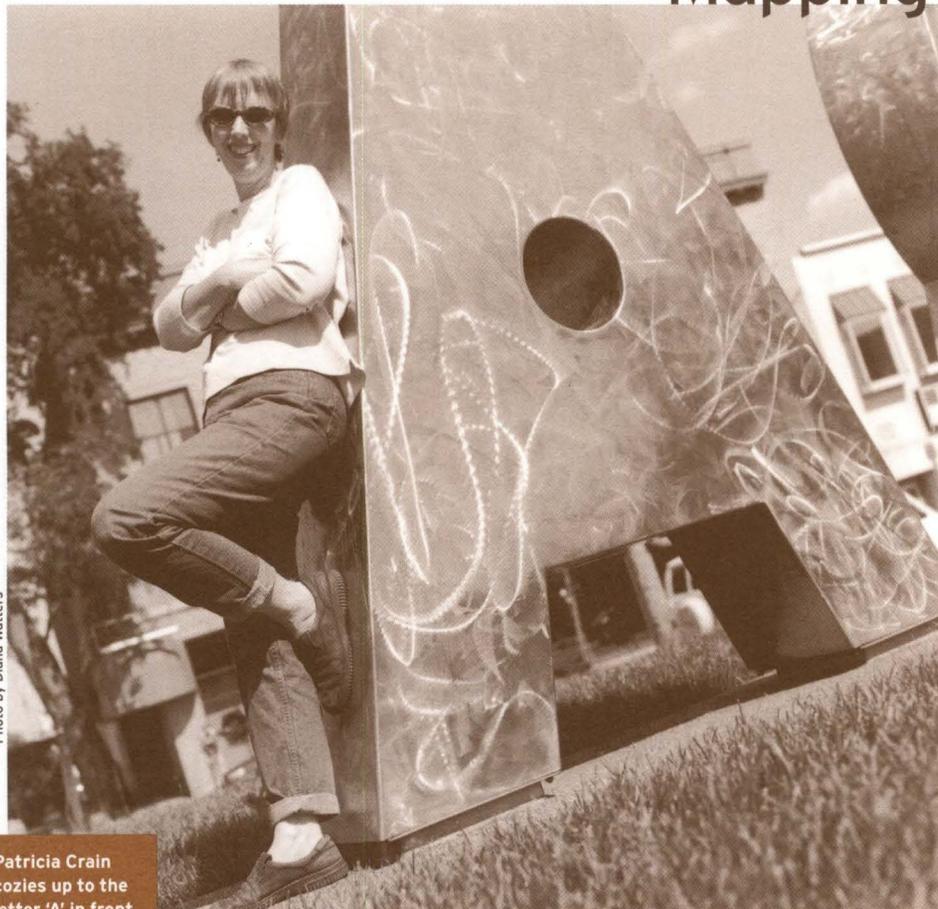


Photo by Diana Watters

Patricia Crain cozies up to the letter 'A' in front of Minneapolis's Walker Library.

In her class “Literacy and American Cultural Diversity: The Politics and Poetics of Literacy,” English professor Patricia Crain sends her undergraduates on “literacy walks” around campus, asking them to look at spaces, signs, and symbols through the “lens of literacy.”

In Crain’s view, literacy is in part “an exercise in looking”: Learning to read, she says, “means first and foremost learning *how* to look.” On their walks, her students relearn the alphabet, in a sense. They see how the alphabet in its many uses and configurations—in elevators, on street corners, at building entrances—shapes and defines their daily lives.

Students return from their walks with a heightened appreciation for the extent to which “literacy” is not just about reading books. Indeed, it is not a single skill at all but many—one reason why Crain much prefers the plural, “literacies,” to encompass not only the multiplicity of languages and cultures but also a broader and more complex bundle of understandings of the world we inhabit every day.

Crain has made it her business as a scholar to study the alphabet in its successive his-

torical incarnations as an instrument of socialization and acculturation. Smiling at the irony that a literary scholar should “narrow her expertise to the ABCs,” she explains that studying the role of alphabetic instruction over the years—including the pictographic forms of letters in primers and picture books—can illuminate not only the history of language education but also the social and political landscape.

What’s important is not the alphabet itself, she says, but “what gets recorded along with the alphabet”—systems of power and privilege, moral lessons, prescriptions for acceptable behavior, culturally embedded ideology and values.

Her own literacy is very important to her, says Crain, adding that she has spent much of her life lost in books. “I was always an ideal reader. I even loved postcards and road signs, anything with words. Eventually I began to wonder, What’s reading for, anyway? How did we come to see reading as a central value?” And so she went back to the basics—the alphabet, and beginning instruction in reading—and began to critique the very thing she loved.

PATRICIA CRAIN

Education

- Ph.D. '96 Columbia U, English and Comparative literature
- M.A. '89, M.Phil. '91, Columbia U
- B.A. '70 Bennington College

Professional history

- 2000- assistant professor, English, U of M
- 1996-2000, assistant professor, Princeton

Honors and awards

- McKnight Land-Grant Professor, 2001-2003
- Bicentennial Preceptorship, Princeton, 1999-2000
- Spencer Foundation Fellowship in the History of Education, Newberry Library, 1998-99

Professional activities

- 2001 Conference for the Society for the History of Authorship, Reading, and Publishing: presentation on literacy and the history of U.S. election ballots.
- Lead scholar, “Artifacts of Childhood: 500 Years of Children’s Books,” Exhibition, Newberry Library, Chicago

Major publication

- *The Story of A: The Alphabetization of America*, Stanford U Press, 2000.

Work in Progress

- “Alphabetical Disorders: The Origins of American Literacy”

It wasn’t until the eighteenth century, Crain notes, that the pedagogical alphabet emerged as a tool of mass literacy. “Seemingly neutral alphabetic figures” were freighted with all the baggage of a culture steeped in piety and bound by a rigid moral code. Literacy itself became a touchstone of virtue, social status, and good citizenship as what Crain calls the “tyranny of literacy” took hold. The man or woman of letters occupied a kind of exalted cultural status, and literacy became inextricably linked to mass consumption and the distribution and accumulation of wealth. It became a marker of class and status, and an instrument of social reform.

The price of literacy

Literacy comes with a price, says Crain. When students talk about their own experiences with literacy, many recount stories of what Crain calls their “loss of innocence about reading.” The “primary reading experience” of childhood—being read to—is for some people a sweet memory, says Crain. But the process of acquiring literacy—learning to read and write—is fraught with peril. Given the high stakes (grades, gold stars, approval of teachers and peers) and the constant “diagnosing and labeling,” some students experience real trauma.

When students learn that there is a “right” way to read a text, they “feel bullied because they don’t get to have their own interpretation,” says Crain, adding that the trick is to help preserve whatever magic remains of “early reading moments” by allowing students to “own” the text without unleashing a kind of interpretive anarchy.

Literacy as commonly understood and practiced has “an imperial aspect,” says Crain. Given or withheld by those in power, it defines “who’s in and who’s out,” who gets heard and who doesn’t—just as access to computers determines who can and cannot participate in the new economy.

Crain even takes to task E.B. White’s *The Elements of Style*, long considered the sacred text of American literacy, or what she calls “American plainstyle.” There is, she says, “a certain smug, middlebrow ‘we’ that becomes the strict, monocultural model of [English] literacy” and that, in effect, trumps all other literacies.

“Encoded in ... [letter grades] is the entire social contract of Enlightenment and nineteenth century pedagogy, with its assumptions about forming children and reforming society.”

Pointing to White’s principles of “cleanliness, accuracy, and brevity” in writing, Crain notes that this “secular, pietistic” model excludes anyone whose “literacy” does not measure up, even suggesting a kind of moral lapse in anyone whose writing is “unclean.”

At home in Minnesota

A transplant from New York, Crain has found Minnesota a congenial place. While occasionally lonesome for New York’s “chaotic street energy,” she is drawn to the public service mission of the University and to the state’s populist temperament.

“The University of Minnesota is open and egalitarian,” she says. “That’s its point. It’s not meant to train an economic elite.”

As for teaching, it’s one of Crain’s greatest joys—and her service learning course was “one of the highlights” of her first year, she says. As a graduate student, Crain worried that she would dislike teaching. Today she says, “I can’t believe I’m getting paid to do this. I feel downright sly.”

The down side? Assigning grades. In the epilogue to her acclaimed book *The Story of A: The Alphabetization of America*, Crain shares the tribulations of grading: “Marking—what a word! what an activity!—makes me experience myself most vividly as ... a conduit for the institution’s power over [my students] ...

“Encoded in these [letter grades] is the entire social contract of Enlightenment and nineteenth century pedagogy, with all of its assumptions about forming children and reforming society.”

“Who owns the letters of the alphabet? It sounds like a silly question, but courts around the world are grappling with it”

—Adam Liptak, “Legally, the Alphabet Isn’t as Simple as A, B and C,” *The New York Times*, Sept. 2, 2001

Wilson cracks communication codes

by Mary Shafer

Kirt Wilson was in junior high when his mother worried that her only child was spending too much time watching television.

“So Mom enrolled me in night school,” recalls Wilson, now assistant professor of speech communication. “My choices were chess or computer language.”

Wilson chose the computer language course—and that, he says, was the beginning of his continuing and avid interest in computer technology and programming code, so much so that—even after completing a master’s degree in rhetorical studies at Purdue University—he thought he might one day find his professional home in the computer industry. At the same time, though, he found himself “turned on to rhetoric as a political exercise,” he says. So he completed a Ph.D. at Northwestern University, doing a dissertation on the Civil Rights Act of 1875. He joined the U faculty in January 1996.

Today, Wilson is both a scholar passionately interested in deciphering the rhetoric of political discourse and a self-confessed “Linux geek,” who maintains his department’s Web site and posts links to computer-related interests on his own home page.

If this 21st-century avocation seems somehow at odds with his scholarly bent toward rhetoric, Wilson makes it seem eminently natural. Both venues excite his voluminous curiosity.

A born lecturer, he loves exploring his theories about how leaders explain and argue their political decisions. Not so much interested in the motives or ideology behind political decision-making, he likes to grapple with the discourse—the filter that mediates the terrain between motives and decisions.

Put another way, Wilson says, if “x” is the motive behind a political decision and “y” is the decision itself, “z” is the vast, constantly changing terrain that makes up public discourse. Take a critical look at those “z’s” in any era and you can uncover the political culture.

“Political judgments,” Wilson says, “result from all kinds of things—back-door dealmaking, lobbying, whatever—but you understand the judgment itself by how people, in the moment of debate, explain their decisions. Rhetoric defines what the public believes, and those beliefs make up the political culture. Rhetoric is about the ‘horizon of the possible,’ that is, what people are ready to accept.”

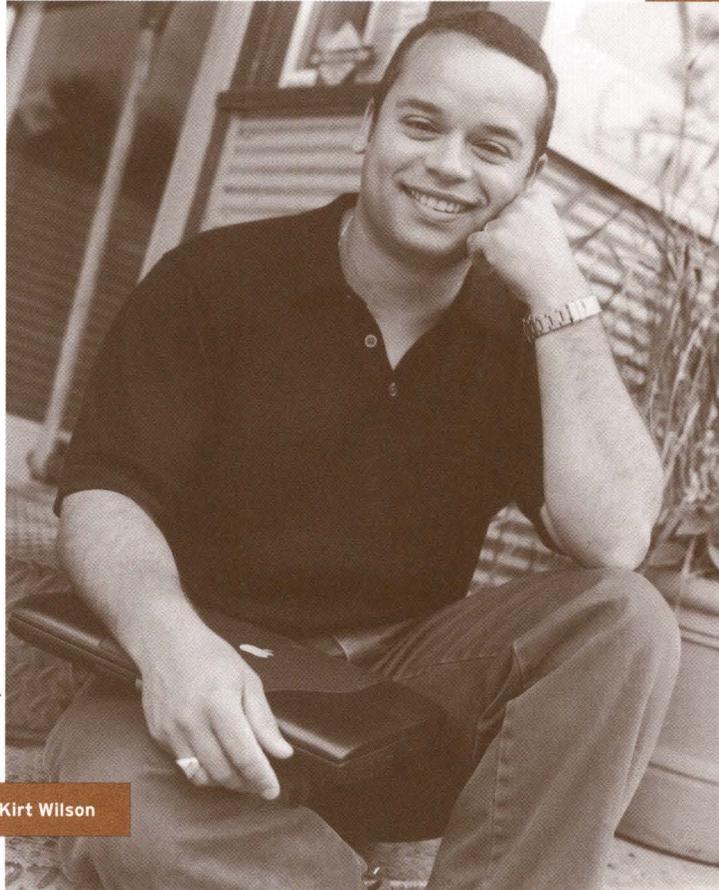


Photo by Diana Walters

Kirt Wilson

KIRT WILSON

Education

- Ph.D. '95 rhetorical studies, Northwestern U
- M.A. '91 rhetorical studies, Purdue
- B.A. comm., Cedarville College, Ohio

Professional history

- 1996-present, assistant professor, speech-communication, U of M
- 1992-95 Instructor, rhetorical history, Northwestern U

Awards and honors

- Recognition of Research Award from the Black Caucus and African American Communication and Culture Div., Nat'l Communication Assoc.
- Nominated by students to receive the 1997-98 Outstanding Faculty Award

Selected publications

- “Black Abolitionist Rhetoric,” *Encyclopedia of Rhetoric*, Oxford U Press.

Work in progress

- “Rhetoric, Race, and Desegregation: The Debate Surrounding the Civil Rights Act of 1875”

His doctoral dissertation about the Civil Rights Act of 1875 is a case in point. “By 1875-76 the politics of equality had changed,” he says.

“Following the Emancipation Proclamation and the 13th, 14th, and 15th amendments, it had become indecorous to disregard equality. You couldn’t silence an African-American in the Senate chamber because African-Americans were elected to be there.

“For Southern Democrats, the question was, ‘How do we institute the old power?’ The answer was to institute a rhetoric of place that could resist the politics of equality. Before the Civil War, equality was not a reality in any sense. Now they could say, ‘African-Americans have political equality because we gave it to them, but they have never been socially equal. Legal equals, yes; political equals, yes; social equals, no.

“Segregation said blacks couldn’t be in the same place as whites because they didn’t have social rights. Social rights were defined as private rights—the right to make friends, to go where you wanted to go. Take public space and turn it into private space and the train becomes personal.” And so, says Wilson, although the Emancipation Proclamation freed the slaves, a modified rhetoric of place won the war—in effect, keeping African-Americans “in their place.”

Even though Wilson’s expertise is in historical rhetoric, given his fascination with technology, it is impossible not to ask him about the role of rhetorical leadership today. Can anyone at all shape the political culture of our technological age?

In reality, he says, rhetorical theories—with a single notion of voice, of ethos—don’t accommodate today’s technological advances. On

“Rhetoric defines what the public believes, and those beliefs make up the political culture.”

the one hand, he says, “we are fragmented, and so rhetorical leadership may be impossible. On the other hand, there’s incredible consolidation on an economic level, with only a handful of companies controlling the major media—not to mention the vast majority of the Internet. So we may not be as fragmented as we think.”

And what about that notion of equality? “We’re not really equal in front of the screen,” Wilson says. “The reality is that it’s an expert’s specialized language. Open software reveals its guts to those who can read the language. They get to see what makes it run. Most people never get to see the Wizard with Microsoft.”

Nora Paul navigates

by Jessica Breed

new media world

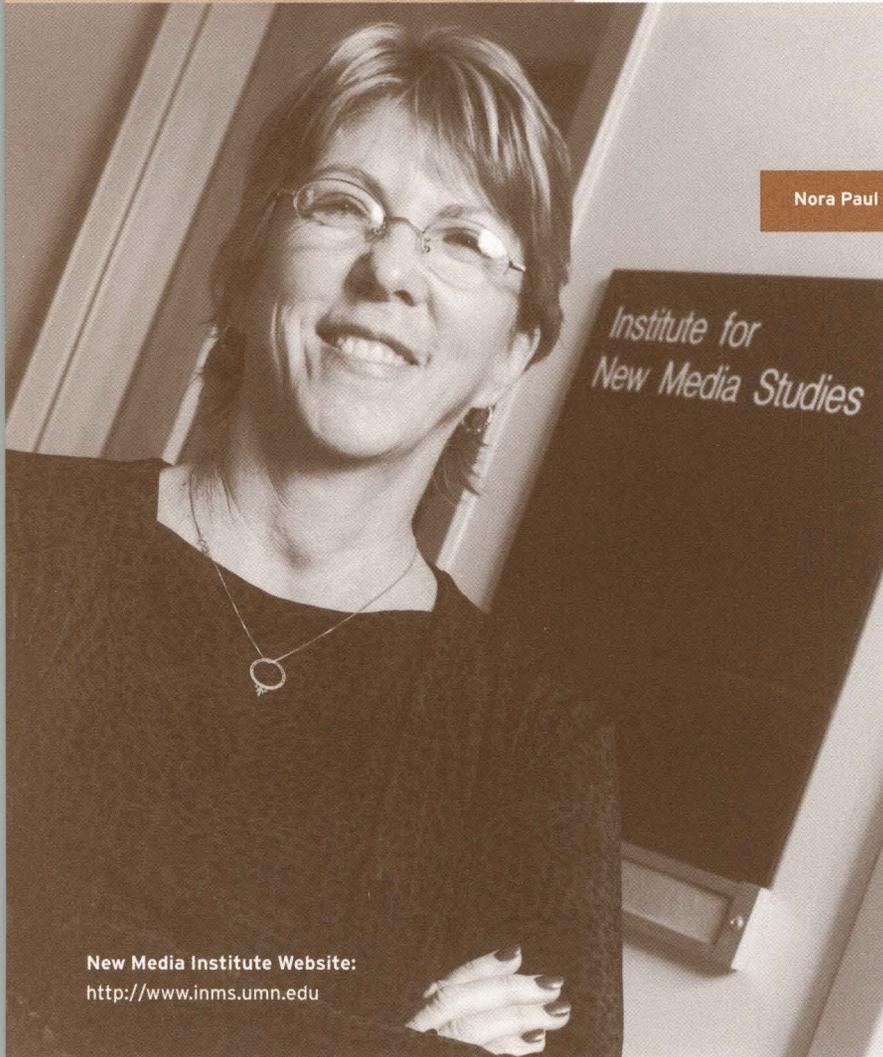


Photo by Diana Watters

New Media Institute Website:
<http://www.inms.umn.edu>

“People keep calling this the ‘information age.’ It’s not. Really, we’re in the age of communication,” says Nora Paul, inaugural director of the School of Journalism’s Institute for New Media Studies.

Both the study and practice of communication are wholly different in the context of “new media,” says Paul, a leading authority on new media whose book on the subject is now in its fourth printing. With the Internet, interactive television, wireless communication, and more to

come, many of the shibboleths that have guided print and broadcast journalism and mass communication for decades have been discarded.

Even while journalism schools continue to teach the “basics” such as solid reporting and the ability to craft a story, technology is forcing the industry to reinvent itself from the inside out, she says.

“The idea that there even is a mass ‘mass media’ is disappearing,” says Paul, “That’s one of the big struggles for mass marketers and mass media communicators dealing with how to get their message to increasingly niche audiences.”

Conventional media gate-keepers are now bypassed, enabling people to go directly to the news source or to a product’s manufacturer and to be more selective about what they see, even—with on-demand marketing and news delivery—to *pre*-select what they see, to filter out electronically anything that doesn’t interest them. Publishers and editors who once determined “what’s fit to print” for mass consumption now ask individual users what they want to see on their computer screens.

New media emerged before anyone knew what the market was, says Paul, and now organizations are scrambling to make sense of where they fit in. Local print media especially are having to rethink their place in the world of global communications, she says. Developing a Web presence is only the beginning; with global venture-media outlets knocking down communication doors, local operations must fully reconceptualize their place in the information universe.

To survive in such a climate, traditional news sources may need to realign their priorities to focus on local news, says Paul: “Frankly, why would I look for news about Eastern Europe in the local Twin Cities newspaper when I can go to the Web? By covering local issues in compelling and interesting ways, news agencies could really shore up their market and maintain themselves as an essential source of news.”

The future of advertising on the Internet is still the “big question mark,” says Paul. Trends show media organizations eagerly opting for high-quality multime-

dia experiences (rich media). But “industry analysts are still trying to determine the cost of creating rich media versus the return,” she notes. And some are questioning the more intangible costs of heavily sponsored information sources, including the blurring of lines between information and advertising, journalism and commerce.

Regarded by industry leaders nationally as what one dubbed a “new media goddess,” Paul is an old hand at new media. She bought her first modem in 1978 and has been using computers to access information ever since. A seasoned journalist, researcher, and news librarian, she now focuses on the delivery end of the communication process, or, as she calls it, “story-telling,” looking at how new communication channels are reshaping both the medium and the message, both form and content.

The institute is positioned to help guide and reshape the way scholars, industry professionals, and the general public think about media and to help practitioners and consumers negotiate new media pathways. Beyond its role as an idea generator, the institute’s most important role, says Paul, is outreach: “If I only work to support the teaching and thinking inside Murphy Hall, I won’t be doing my job. The goal is to connect the research going on here with what the media industry needs to hear about and vice versa.”

That attitude is paying off in the business community, where the institute has received rave reviews. Jen Alstad ’92, cofounder and director of the Twin Cities-based Web design company B-Swing, says, “The University’s focus on digital media is an important magnet, drawing together the people and organizations necessary to create new models.”

That magnetic pull between academia, businesses, and the media industry is in part what brought New Directions for News, the nation’s premier think tank for cutting-edge media, to the Twin Cities from the University of Missouri. Citing the “abundant talent and innovation in Minnesota news organizations,” director Dale Peskin says Minnesota is an ideal location.

Paul couldn’t agree more. “It’s great to be a part of the School of Journalism and Mass Communication, where there’s such energy, change, and inquiry about what the future could be,” she says. And yet, she is quick to acknowledge, some things haven’t changed and may never change—the need for good old-fashioned communication skills and the solid liberal arts grounding that “serves journalists well.”

Her caveat to educators: “If you are worrying about how to get JavaScript training into your News Writing 101 class, don’t. Concentrate on getting them to be good wordsmiths.”

NORA PAUL

Education

- M.L.S., Texas Women’s U, ’75
- B.A. English and sociology, Texas Women’s U, ’74

Professional history

- 2000- Institute for New Media Studies Director
- July 2000-May ’01 New Directions for News interim director
- 1991-2000 Poynter Institute for Media Studies, faculty and Library Director

Other accomplishments

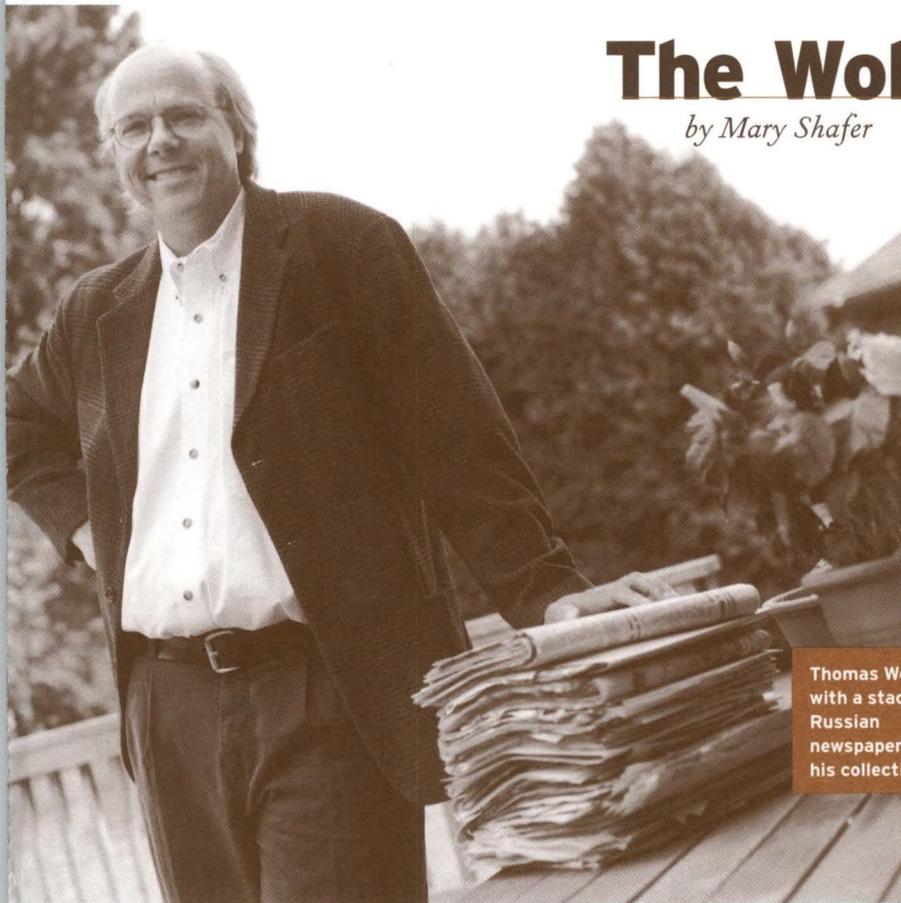
- Online News Assoc., board member
- Henbry award 1995, Special Libraries Association, News Division

Latest book

- *Computer Assisted Research: A Guide to Tapping Online Information*, now in 4th ed.

Kudos

- “Everyone who’s ever worked with Nora says the same thing about her: She’s a talented researcher, teacher, and organizer. And she knows everybody.”—Dale Peskin, president of the Society of Newspaper Designers



Thomas Wolfe with a stack of Russian newspapers from his collection.

The Wolfe chronicles:

by Mary Shafer

POWER the & media

Relaxing on the back deck of his Roseville home on a sunny July morning, Thomas Wolfe is the picture of contentment—and with good reason, he says. As one of the faculty members recruited in the history department’s “mega search” in 1999, Wolfe says he’s “overjoyed” to be in Minnesota, where he’s “learning new stuff incredibly fast” in a collegial and dynamic department.

With a 1997 doctorate in history and anthropology from the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor, the soft-spoken Wolfe is a scholar of European history, particularly that of eastern Europe and the Soviet Union.

It’s where this geographic bent intersects with his interests in anthropology, sociology, and media, however, that Wolfe finds his academic calling. His doctoral work, for example, explored journalism in

“[Today’s] political leaders... are really leaders of their own communication teams.”

THOMAS WOLFE

Education

- Ph.D. '97 anthropology and history, U of Michigan-Ann Arbor
- Master of International Relations '83, Columbia U
- B.A. '79 comparative literature

Professional history

- 1999- assistant professor, history and anthropology, U of M
- 1998-99 visiting assistant professor, history, U of Michigan
- 1997-99 lecturer, communication studies, anthropology, and history

Awards & honors

- 2000 McKnight Research Fellow, U of Minn.
- 2000 Summer Research Fellowship, U of M

Selected publications

- *Communications, Media, and Propaganda in The Encyclopedia of European Social History*, Prentice-Hall, 2000.
- “Towards an Anthropology of Governance,” *Anthropology of Eastern Europe Review*, fall 2000.

Work in progress

- “Living in Print: The Press and Governance in Late Soviet Society”

the Soviet Union. He’s interested in how people are shaped by—and resist—power, as well as in how the media influence these processes. He teaches media history as well as a graduate seminar on socialism.

A thoughtful critic of media technology’s political, cultural, and social impact, Wolfe is not without worry about what he sees. In the Internet era, he says, “Everything is immediate, shortened. Students need to know how to use the Web and the computer. These are good tools—but they are not substitutes for

thinking, for making sense slowly.

“The most important thing about teaching is getting students confused and puzzled,” he laughs. “They must be encouraged to go over layers of meaning, to grow into a critical language and sensibility. You don’t learn that rapidly.”

Wolfe’s perspective reflects both his role as an academician and his particular understanding of how media shaped and reshaped the former Soviet Union.

“Communism was born in an era of a certain kind of discourse,” he says. That discourse was through print—and it was vital to the Communist revolution.

“Lenin’s message in 1917—‘The czar has to go’—was given through newspapers,” Wolfe says. “All assumptions were around print. Society was saturated with print; newspapers were read religiously, passed around, and consumed avidly.

“The microchip revolution happened during the Cold War. Seventy-four years after the Russian Revolution—in 1991—we had the Internet. Print had marked the Soviet Union; now Communism had moved into the electronic era. Print had proclaimed liberty, freedom, and individuality. At the end, there was this bizarre, unpredictable, visual medium—an incredibly different scene.”

Nationalism takes on a whole new meaning in this new age, Wolfe says, and the force of the seat of power at the government’s geographic and political center is attenuated by the diffused virtual reality of the Internet, which redefines the concept of space and place.

“How could you adapt a rigidly controlled country to the new reality?” Wolfe asks. “Government is about place, order in a place. The Internet makes it harder to imagine the connection to a place. How do you govern a terrain when the people aren’t even there?”

It’s a question of political leadership that hasn’t been answered well in Russia, says Wolfe. The U.S. answer, he believes, has been to perfect the art of image making.

“Political leaders craft an image for their sources of power—for Texas oil sources, Silicon Valley sources, Hollywood sources,” says Wolfe.

“All political leaders today must have some theoretical attitude toward controlling and presenting information. They’re really leaders of their own communication teams. Leaders are caught up in contradictions

all the time because they craft different images for different power sources.”

Wolfe’s concern is that people may not worry enough about those contradictions. Faced with a surfeit of information and visual clutter, we learn to

accommodate the contradictions, simply filtering out what doesn’t concern us or doesn’t square with our world view. We turn on the white noise and turn inward.

A liberal arts education, Wolfe believes, can awaken our critical awareness and keep us intellectually tuned in to the world.

“The Internet has the potential to raise awareness,” he says. “The answer lies in young people learning about the history behind democracy. What does it mean to participate in a democracy?”

“It’s crucial that people preserve and heighten their sensitivities. The big question is how to get people to approach the Web as a library and not as a distraction in an age when distraction is encouraged.”

“Government is about place
... The Internet makes it
harder to imagine a connection to a place. How do you govern a terrain when people aren’t there?”

Hún Qiáo confronts memories of World War II

Last May, an extraordinary concert took place at the Ordway Theater in St. Paul. *Hún Qiáo: A Concert of Remembrance and Reconciliation* featured world-renowned cellist

Yo Yo Ma performing with the Chamber Music Society of Minnesota.

The musicians, including Korean-born violinist and professor of music Young-Nam Kim, played four newly commissioned works by composers

from China, Japan, Korea, and the United States.

Hún Qiáo, Chinese for “Bridge of Souls,” expressed the wish of the performers, composers, and concert organizers to heal the World War II-era wounds in Asia and beyond.

On October 19, the College of Liberal Arts and the Hún Qiáo Committee of The Chamber Music Society of Min-

nesota will sponsor a followup symposium. *Hún Qiáo: Confronting the Memories of World War II—A Symposium on the Asian Tragedies in Wartime* will feature prominent scholars and activists from the United States, China, and Japan. They will discuss the nature of World War II in Asia and the serious lingering issues of memory and restitution, including the Nanjing Massacre, enslavement of Chinese and Korean “comfort women,” and treatment of the war in school textbooks.

The program is being coordinated by **Eric Weitz**, holder of the Arsham and Charlotte Ohanessian Chair in the College of Liberal Arts, and **Stephen Feinstein**, director of CLA’s Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies, along with Professor Yue-him Tam of Macalester College and the Hún Qiáo Committee of The Chamber Music Society.

For current informational links on Asian atrocities, see the Web site of the Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies, www.chgs.umn.edu. For information on the symposium, contact Kathryn Walls Snyder, 612-624-0256.

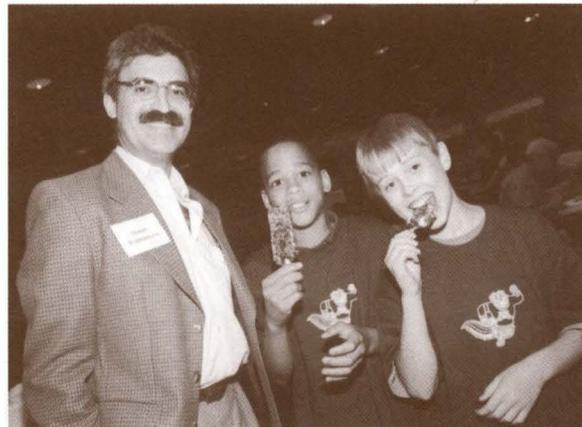


Fifth graders taste-test the U

Fifty fifth-graders from Jordan Park School in Minneapolis experienced a day in the life of the University early this summer. They examined ancient artifacts in the archaeobiology lab with anthropologist **Martha Tappen**, composed poetry with English professor **Maria Damon**, questioned history professor **Barbara Welke** about the U.S. Constitution, and toured a digital media production studio in Rarig Center. They also visited a dorm room and the University rec center.

The pilot program that brought these elementary students into higher education grew out of a partnership between the University of Minnesota and the Minneapolis Public Schools.

Its purpose is to engage young people in the excitement of learning and help them see how the basic skills they are now learning in school are connected to the skills they will need one day to pursue a college education. Over the long term, the goal is to help these students, many of whom would be first-generation college students, to see the University in their future.



CLA Dean Steven Rosenstone with fifth-graders Dominique Brown and Vincent Coborn of Jordan Park School.

Photo by Diana Walters

Asked if he would like to attend the U one day, a student replied, “Yes, but it is a long way to each building!”

Baryshnikov to dance into CLA

Baryshnikov. Say the name and even non-dance enthusiasts will stop in their tracks and watch for an airborne body to inscribe a soaring, lofty arc across the sky.

In late September, this legendary dancer and choreographer will be toe-to-toe with CLA dance students. In a collaboration with the Walker Art Center, the Department of Theatre Arts and Dance will host a six-day residency

with Mikhail Baryshnikov’s White Oak Project dance troupe. Lectures, demonstrations, and master classes will culminate in a postmodern dance performance of “PAST Forward” on September 27-29 at the Ted Mann Theatre. Two of the expected six works in the performance will include dance students.

FFI: 612-624-5060

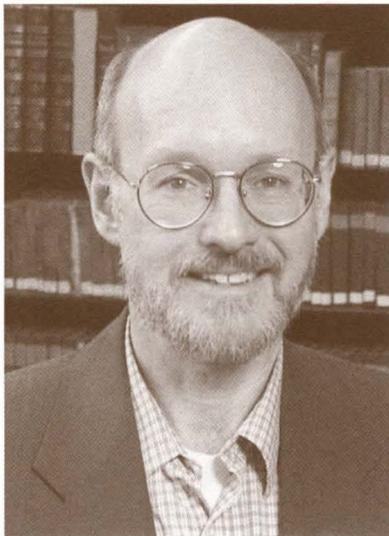
CLA tidbits

Language teachers from 27 states and 8 other nations traveled to the Twin Cities campus this summer for professional development and training at CARLA, the University's Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition.

FFI: <http://carla.acad.umn.edu/>

The Minnesota Population Center was awarded a major grant from the National Institutes of Health to make U.S. census information since 1790 readily available to researchers and the public. This award follows another grant from the National Science Foundation. The center is one of twelve NIH-designated population research centers at leading institutions around the country.

Richard McCormick, Department of German, Dutch, and Scandinavian, is



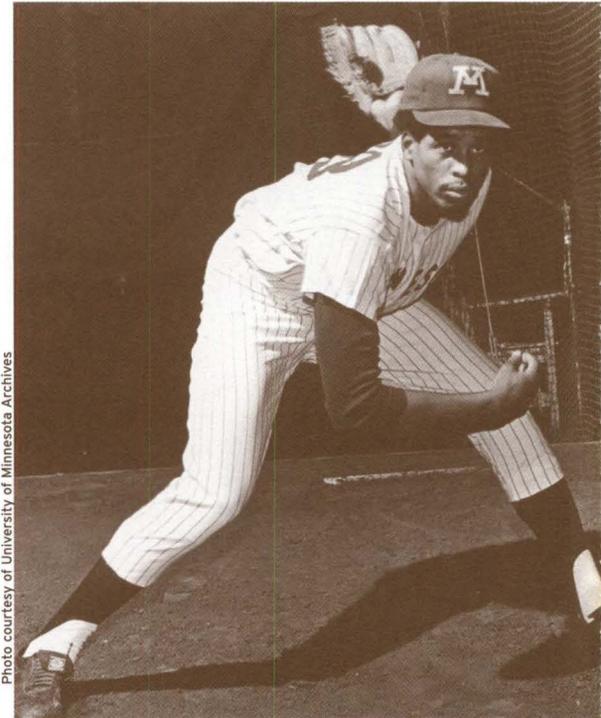
Rick McCormick

the new director of CLA honors. Rick replaces **Gordon Hirsch**, who is returning to research and teaching in the Department of English after 12 years of leadership that earned him the affection and esteem of students and staff and a Morse Alumni Award for Contributions to Undergraduate Education.

An accomplished scholar and teacher, McCormick has served the college with distinction in both undergraduate and graduate education. **Dick Skaggs**, associate dean for faculty and research, lauds McCormick's "experience, commitment to excellent undergraduate education, and zest for leading our Honors Division to even greater distinction."

CLA alum **Dave Winfield**, the first Gopher athlete to be inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame and the only athlete to be drafted in three different sports, received the U's Outstanding Achievement Award at a Minnesota Twins baseball game on June 9. University president **Mark Yudof** did the honors. Says Winfield, "Finishing college with four years' experience [in] a competitive academic environment..."

helped me grow as a person. It gave me a foundation for life. When I left the University, I think I was as pre-



Dave Winfield playing for the Gophers, about 1970

pared as any young man going into a professional environment."

Correction: On page 17 of the spring 2001 *CLA Today*, the photograph of Rhodes Scholar **Molly Zahn** serving food at a soup kitchen was taken at St. Stephen's Church in south Minneapolis, not St. Frances Cabrini (where Molly is a member).

SHOWBOAT: The river journey begins

Just 18 months after a fire destroyed the original showboat, the University's new Minnesota Centennial Showboat has been launched from its dry-dock in Greenville, Miss., in preparation for its voyage home to St. Paul, Minn. By late October 2001, the showboat will begin its 1,040-mile journey home to become the centerpiece of the \$15 million dollar riverfront revival of St. Paul's Harriet Island Regional Park.

At a Grand Opening on July 4, 2002, a production of the melodrama "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde" will launch the inaugural showboat season.

FFI: <http://cla.umn.edu/theatre/showboat.html>



As time goes by... The legend continues

University of Minnesota Homecoming. What it's about is coming home—to the place where you learned French in Folwell Hall, sipped coffee in Coffman Memorial Union, studied into the wee hours for your history final, maybe met the love of your life—a person, an idea, a career, or all of the above and more.

If you haven't been back to

campus for a while, you'll find it changed. But some things never go out of date. At the University, and in the College of Liberal Arts, a great education is still a great education, and the life of the mind is as enthralling as ever.

We hope you'll join us in CLA to revisit and re-experience some of the joys of living and learning at the University of Minnesota.



HOMECOMING 2001 schedule of events

NOTE: Events with a star (★) are coordinated by the College of Liberal Arts and require reservations.

Friday, October 19

7:30 a.m. Economics Roundtable Discussion★ (Weisman Museum)

Speaker: **Richard Sandor**
Ph.D., Chairman/CEO,
Environmental Financial
Products

9:30 a.m. Homecoming Registration (Weisman Museum)

10:10 a.m. Be our guest in a class taught by a CLA professor★

Shakespeare—**Charles Sugnet**
Modern Russia—**Theofanis Stavrou**
Minnesota History—**Hy Berman**
Intro to Aesthetics—**Marcia Muelder Eaton**

10:10 a.m. See the campus!★
(also at 2:30 p.m.)

East Bank Bus Tour
West Bank Arts Quarter Tour
Weisman Art Museum Tour
Bell Museum Tour

12 noon Decades Luncheon★

(Weisman; \$10 per person)
Where We've Been and Where We're Going—**Steven Rosenstone**,
CLA dean

3:30-5 p.m. School of Journalism Homecoming Activities Featuring filmmaker John Hughes of *Rhythm and Hues*. For more information call 612-626-1723.

3-5 p.m. Department of Psychology Reception★

Honoring four alumni:
Harrison Gough, Ph.D.
James J. Jenkins, Ph.D.
John L. Holland, Ph.D.
Paul Meehl, Ph.D.

8 p.m. Ring Around the Moon, by Jean Anouilh (Rarig Center), a University Theatre production of a captivating comedy

For tickets call: 612-624-2345

Saturday, October 20

8 a.m. Pancake Feed
(McNamara Alumni Center)

9 a.m. Homecoming Parade

11 a.m. Homecoming Game
Gophers v. Michigan State
FFI: 612-624-8080; 1-800-U-Gopher

7:30 p.m. Collage Concert (Ted Mann—free of charge), a musical extravaganza featuring the outstanding musicians of the School of Music.

8 p.m. Ring Around the Moon
(Rarig Center)

For tickets call: 612-624-2345

FFI and reservations:
Maggie Williams, 612-626-7642
will0957@cla.umn.edu

Faculty and Staff

Sociology professor **Christopher Uggen** received the Outstanding Faculty Award from the University of Minnesota Mortar Board National Honor Society for his "superior dedication to undergraduate research."

Anatoly Liberman (German, Scandinavian, and Dutch) and **Sara Evans** (history) were awarded research fellowships by the American Council of Learned Societies.



Photo by Diana Walters

Sara Evans

Indira Junghare (Institute of Linguistics, English as a Second Language, and Slavic Languages and Literatures) is one of six honorees to receive the University of Minnesota Outstanding Community Service Award.

Turtle Pictures, a book of poetry by **Ray Gonzalez** (English), won a Minnesota Book Award.

Communication disorders professor and chair **Charles Speaks** received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Minnesota Speech-Language-Hearing Association.

Ananya Chatterjea, assistant professor of theatre arts and dance; Marge Maddux, associate professor of theatre arts and dance; **Susan Noakes**, professor of French and Italian; and **Oliver Nicholson**, associate professor of classical and Near Eastern studies received the McKnight Arts and Humanities Endowment Award.

Thomas Rose, professor of art, and **Kathryn Reyerson**, professor of history, received the McKnight Research Award for 2001.

George Sheets, associate professor of classical and Near Eastern studies, was the inaugural recipient of the Excellence



Allen Isaacman

History professor **Allen Isaacman**, a specialist in African history, has been named Regents' Professor—the U's highest faculty honor. The University's 20 Regents' Professors, 7 of them from CLA, are chosen for academic distinction, scope and quality of their scholarly or artistic contributions, teaching quality, and contributions to the public good. The author of five books and recipient of Guggenheim and Fulbright fellowships, Isaacman also helped set up and run an interdisciplinary program on global change that has trained more than 180 graduate students.

in College Teaching Award from the Classical Association of the Middle West and South.

Frank Sorauf, Regents' Professor Emeritus of Political Science and former CLA dean, received one of 12 President's Awards for Outstanding Service for 2001.



Jack Zipes with grade-schoolers

Jack Zipes, professor of German and international expert on fairy tales, was named to the KARE 11 TV's Eleven Who Care and to the Volunteer Hall of Fame by the

Minneapolis/St. Paul Magazine for his service to public school students. Zipes directs the Neighborhood Bridges story-telling program for elementary schools.

Sociology professor **Barbara Laslett** received the 2001 Jessie Bernard Award in recognition of scholarly research about the role of women in society.

Professor **Jeffrey Broadbent** was the first sociologist ever to receive the Masayoshi Ohira Memorial Prize for studies contributing to development of good political policies.

Professor **Kenneth Doyle** (journalism) has been appointed to the advisory board of the new Center for Mental Health and Media at Harvard University, where he will advise primarily on the connections between mental health and money in various cultures around the world.

Journalism professors **Hazel Dicken-Garcia**, **Kathleen Hansen**, and **Daniel Sullivan** were honored as distinguished mentors at the President's Distinguished Faculty Mentor Program.

Barry Feld, associate member of the sociology faculty and Centennial Professor at the Law School, received the Outstanding Book Award from the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences for *Bad Kids: Race and the Transformation of the Juvenile Court* (Oxford 1999).



Chin-Chuan Lee

Professor **Chin-Chuan Lee** (journalism) has been appointed vice chair of the international advisory committee of the first Center for Media and Social Studies in China, under the auspices of the Chinese Ministry of Education.

Recipients of CLA's Outstanding Service Awards for 2000 are:

Peggy Berkowitz (CLA administration), **Margaret Demmessie** (Spanish and Portuguese), **Leslie Denny** (CLA administration), **Rochelle Emmel** (theatre arts and dance),

Elizabeth Gates (psychology), **Susan Halvorson** (art), **Lisa Higgs** (journalism and mass communication), **Mark Ireland** (Career and Community Learning Center), **John**

Scoring a hit

Music professor and composer **Judith Lang Zaimont** was recognized as an Honored Composer and one of two prize winners in the inaugural American Composers Invitational competition sponsored by the Van Cliburn Foundation.

Zaimont's composition "Impronta Digitale" was performed by both gold medal winners at the 11th Van Cliburn International Competition.

For more information about Zaimont's works, go to <http://www.joblink.org/jzaimont>.



Judith Lang Zaimont

Libra (Asian languages and literatures), **Sally Lieberman** (CLA honors), **Jenneke Arnolda Oosterhoff** (German, Scandinavian, and Dutch), **Diane Rackowski** (CLA Language Center), **Eugenia Smith** (*CLA Today* editor and CLA communications director), and **Joel Wurl** (Immigration History Research Center).

Sociology professor **Karen Lutfey** received the 2001 Roberta G. Simmons Dissertation Award from the

American Sociology Association Medical Sociology Section.

Thomas Rose, professor of art (sculpture, multimedia), has been named Fesler-Lampert Chair in Humanities. Appointment to the chair recognizes his contributions as a distinguished scholar and teacher at the University.

Students

Anne MacKenzie Kustritz, senior in cultural studies/comparative literature and psychology, has been awarded an Andrew W. Mellon Fellowship in Humanistic Studies for 2001.

Susie Vang, freshman, was named a Star Tribune Foundation Scholar. The award includes a tuition scholarship to pursue a journalism degree and a guaranteed internship with the *Minneapolis Star Tribune* upon graduation.



Nicole Gary

Nicole Gary, a senior advertising major in the School of Journalism and Mass Communication was recently named one of "25 Superstars" by Ad

Age. She will graduate in 2002 and plans to attend law school to specialize in intellectual property.

Sociology graduate student **Switbert Kamazima** was one of two recipients of the 2001 Dunn Peace Scholarship Award. Kamazima, also a Peace Scholar Dissertation Fellow, will do field research in the Tanzania and Uganda border region.

Sociology graduate student **Lisette Haro** has been awarded the American Sociology Association Minority Fellowship Program predoctoral fellowship for the 2000-2001 academic year.

A paper by journalism students **Shirley Fang Wan** and **Patrick Meirick**—"How Does Political Commentary Shape Perceptions of Political Candidates?"—was selected as the Top Student Paper in the Communication Theory and Methodology division by the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication.

Three CLA graduate students received Fulbright grants: **Jodi Horne** (feminist studies) will travel to Namibia; **Cecily Marcus** (comparative studies in discourse and society) will travel to Argentina; and **Caitlin Verfenstein** (classics) will conduct research in Greece.

Jason Peck (graduate student, German) and **Marc Teichman** (senior, German) received research fellowships to Germany from the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD).

CLA Alumni Society

Board updates

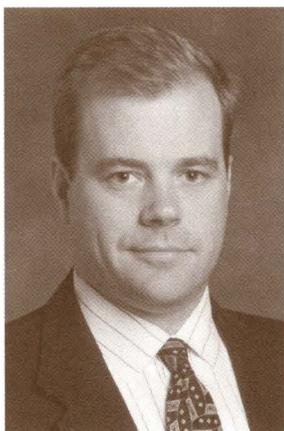


Photo by Tim Rummelhoff

David Gross

In May, **Roger Beck** completed his two-year term as board president. During his tenure, the mentor program grew from fewer than 60 participants to more than 200! The alumni board of directors grew from a group of 8 to 16, and the Critical Dialogues Lecture Series has continued to attract audiences to campus to listen to and converse with our stellar faculty and alumni. Hats off to Roger for a wonderful two years!

CLA would like to welcome the new members of the executive committee of the alumni board.

David Gross is the new CLA Alumni Society president. A board member for three years, Gross served most recently as chair of the mentor program. He is a partner with Faegre and Benson law firm and lectures at the University of Minnesota Law School.

Shane Schmidt is the new vice president. He served on the Critical Dialogues committee for the past year and volunteered with the UMAA's legislative outreach program.

Jeff Will is the new treasurer of the board and also chair of the membership and outreach committee. A mentor in the CLA mentor program, he will focus on student outreach and UMAA membership.

Mentoring

By the time you receive this issue, fall semester will be under way, the leaves will be showing hints of maroon and gold, and CLA students will be matched with some of the most talented and creative alumni in Minnesota.

Will you be one of those talented and creative mentors? Can you find a few hours per month to help mold and shape future business, non-profit, health care, and artistic leaders?

Better still, can you invite a CLA student to your workplace, help him or her with resume building or job skills, or simply be a trusted personal and professional resource—a “connection” to the world outside the U of M?

Student interest in the program is at an all-time high, and the need for quality mentors has never been greater.

If you have a few hours to spare and are seeking a great volunteer opportunity without a large time commitment, please join the CLA Mentor Program, which matches our undergraduates with alumni and friends.

The program will kick off with a dinner and training session on October 9. Signing up for the program is easy: Just log on to the CLA Alumni Society Web site at www.cla.umn.edu/alumni and fill out the form. We will take it from there and make sure you and your student have a great experience!

Thanks for the

memories

As much as things change at the University of Minnesota—faces, fashions, fads, favorite hangouts and courses—some things never change.

New students arrive on campus every fall filled with bright promise and big dreams, if not a little trepidation. And when they leave some years later, older and a little wiser, their minds are brimming with new ideas and life plans, their address books (these days, Palm Pilots) with the names of new friends, their heads and hearts with memories.

We're collecting stories, photographs, and memorabilia of decades past for our 135th anniversary celebration in 2004.

If you have memories to share—or if you want to respond to a story in this or any other issue—please mail correspondence to the CLA Today editor, College of Liberal Arts, University of Minnesota, 225 Johnston Hall, 101 Pleasant Street S.E.,

Minneapolis, MN 55455; or e-mail us at claext@cla.umn.edu.

Please tell us how to contact you, and provide your major(s), grad date(s), a brief career history, and anything else that might help us know you better.

We look forward to hearing from you!



Photo courtesy of University of Minnesota Archives



Photo by Lisa Spindler

Millie Jeffrey, tireless champion for justice

by Judy Woodward

When Bill Clinton presented Mildred Jeffrey '32 with the 2000 Presidential Medal of Freedom, the nation's highest civilian honor, the tall president had to bend almost double to congratulate the diminutive 89-year-old labor leader.

But when it comes to the things that count—courage, energy, vision, and public service—Millie Jeffrey is a giant. Indeed, the Mildred Jeffrey Collection at Wayne State University—where she served on the board of governors for 16 years—runs to 63 linear feet of documents, on subjects ranging from civil rights to consumer protection to women in the labor movement.

When Jeffrey was still Mildred McWilliams, studying psychology as a CLA undergraduate during the Depression, she began testing her political wings as a young socialist and member of the Women's International League For Peace and Freedom. The campus YWCA to which she belonged ("one of the most radical groups on campus at the time") took a public stand in favor of racial integration, and so did she. With an African-American classmate, she worked to desegregate some restaurants near campus where black diners were not welcome.

A few months later, a photo of Millie marching in support of Socialist party leader Norman Thomas appeared on the front page of the Minneapolis newspaper. Her younger sister, Arlene McWilliams Swain, recalls that

in those days, just saying the word "socialist" could get your mouth washed out with soap: "There I was in Catholic grade school, and there was a picture of my big sister in the newspaper, picketing for a socialist!"

In Jeffrey's view, that Catholic upbringing helped shape her political ideals, developing in her "a strong sense of caring and compassion." That sense of caring—honed by education both in the classroom and in the trenches, coupled with uncommon stamina—would lead Jeffrey from her Iowa roots to the forefront of the labor, civil rights, and women's movements throughout the next seven decades. Her friends would include the likes of Hubert Humphrey and Martin Luther King, as well as Geraldine Ferraro, whose historic U.S. vice presidential candidacy she helped orchestrate.

With a B.A. from the U and a master's degree from Bryn Mawr, in 1934 Jeffrey began a decade of work as a labor organizer in the troubled garment industry. In the 1940s, she joined the NAACP and helped to organize Americans for Democratic Action. As returning World War II soldiers displaced the women workers who had filled the ranks of industry, Jeffrey—who already had distinguished herself as a tough but compassionate labor leader—organized the first UAW Women's Conference as the director of a new arm of the United Auto Workers (UAW) union, the Women's Bureau.

"In the early sixties, I was at an NAACP convention in Chicago. Mayor [Richard] Daley had said there were no ghettos in Chicago—imagine that! Then there was a newspaper photo of my daughter being carried off to jail in Baltimore, where there had been a big civil rights demonstration at a [segregated] amusement park. So what to do? I sent her a telegram. It said something like "You have my full support." She showed it to [her cell mates] and told them, 'Well, my family thinks what we're doing is O.K.' When your daughter is arrested, you want her to know that you have her in your thoughts."

—Mildred Jeffrey

"My underlying goal was always to empower women," she says. "Get them to learn their rights—and to exercise them!"

Serving in the administrations of two presidents (Kennedy and Carter), Jeffrey continued working tirelessly to enlarge the economic and political opportunities of women, workers, and people of color. In 1971 she cofounded the National Women's Political Caucus and eagerly joined the fight for ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment.

A self-described "Midwest product" and the eldest of seven children, Jeffrey credits her mother as "an inspiration and a mentor." "She was determined that all of her children would be college-educated," says Jeffrey admiringly, so she moved the family from a small Iowa town to Minneapolis for educational opportunities.

At Minneapolis's Central High School, Jeffrey was senior class vice president and a member of several clubs, including "something called the CCC. That stood for courtesy, consideration, and cleanliness," she laughs. "I still pick up papers on the street."

Reflecting on her accomplishments, Jeffrey is a little impatient with those who try to plumb the wellsprings of her extraordinary character. "I wasn't always inquiring as to my inner motives," she huffs. "I just did it."

As for her future, she doesn't plan to slow down any time soon. "I will retire," she says flatly, "when I die."

CLA grads wage global peace

The honeymoon they had planned was a Caribbean cruise. As her December 1979 wedding to Bud Philbrook (B.A. '69 political science, M.A. '81 public affairs) neared, however, Michele Gran (B.A. '77 journalism) grew more and more uncomfortable about starting her new life with a sun-and-surf vacation. Watching evening newscasts of Cambodian refugees fleeing their homeland in terror, she says, "It seemed kind of obscene to spend time in such a frivolous way. I didn't want to play on the same water where people were risking their lives."

"I tried to tell her it wasn't the same water," jokes Philbrook, who eventually agreed to what he now calls a "properly balanced honeymoon." As it turned out, that meant spending the first week at Disney World and the second week as volunteers in the impoverished, remote mountain village of Conacaste, Guatemala.

"It was a powerful, in-your-face kind of experience," Gran says of her introduction to Guatemala. "I got off the plane and started looking around for the exits."

Luckily, far from fleeing, they allowed themselves to be transformed. Today, the two U grads run Global Volunteers, a nonprofit corporation they founded that matches people who want short-term volunteer experiences with people who need help.

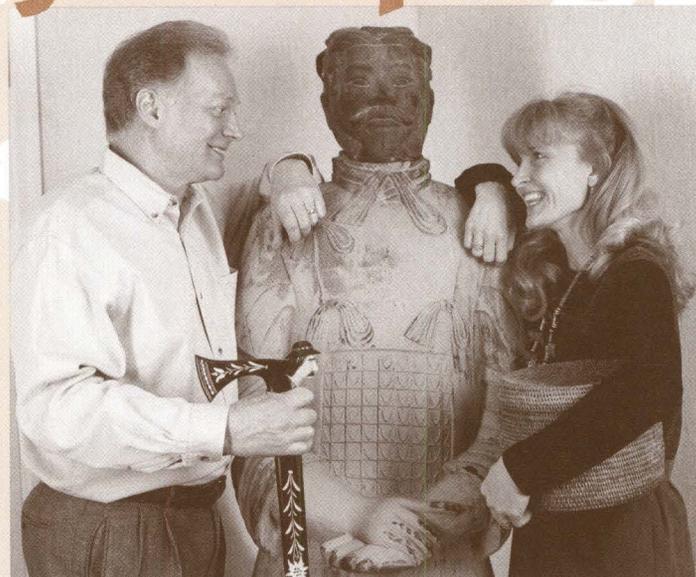
They admit it's been a tough journey from their honeymoon idealism to the realities of running an organization that matches 2,000 volunteers a year with people who need help in dozens of places in the U.S. and abroad.

When they began, says Gran, no model existed for short-term volunteerism. "It didn't seem logical that short-term help was a positive thing," she remembers. "It was a little fringy, a little on the edge. It was very, very hard to create an organization from scratch."

With his two U degrees, Philbrook had done work in economics that allowed him to "see at a microscopic level how what we had done could be beneficial." He used that background to write a grant proposal.

Michele, meanwhile, used her journalism background to develop a brochure for potential benefactors. With some corporate support and a board that included politicians and academics alike, the two sent their first team to Jamaica in 1984.

Today, the Global Volunteers headquarters is a renovated convent in Little Canada, Minn., where copies of *Minnesota Business* rest alongside African masks and Ukrainian dolls and photographs of grinning, gap-toothed kids from Guatemala and India. The organization owes its growth not only to determined business savvy and



Bud Philbrook and Michele Gran

gut-level idealism, but also to its founders' willingness to expand to meet the needs of both volunteers and those they serve.

"The early volunteers were people on the edge of adventure," Philbrook says, "but if you want large numbers, you have to accommodate a wider variety of people."

"Today, we're doing more work with at-risk kids—kids who are homeless, Rumanian kids in the failure-to-thrive ward, kids who are premature or mentally challenged. The Rumanian health care system, for example, is hugely understaffed, so kids don't get any of the nurturing they need. Sometimes we say to volunteers, 'Just go play with the babies.'"

Prospective volunteers apply, and then meet with staff to determine interests, abilities, and affordability of the one-, two-, or three-week experience. The response from volunteers is overwhelmingly positive.

"The ingredients are always there for failure," Philbrook says. "You have results-oriented North Americans going into cultures where time is wholly different, where relationships are more important than product, where nothing works, where roads are full of bumps and ruts. From the local perspective, these are rich Americans, whose pockets overflow. The local people must always be in charge. Even if we know the water is bad, they are the ones who must say, 'Our kids are sick.'"

The couple's own children—three boys aged 12 to 18—have been "fully engaged" in their parents' adventures, Philbrook says. They've taken turns traveling with their parents, one at a time.

Says Philbrook, "We genuinely believe we are actively waging peace. It's enormously gratifying work and we know we make a difference. Still, it's a drop in the bucket."

"And the bucket," adds Gran, "is leaking."

"With all the benefits of a vacation to Greece and the satisfaction of performing a service, a Global Volunteers trip feels like a richer form of travel. It's not just visiting the harbors, beaches, and tourist sites of the larger coastal towns. It's spending long, leisurely evenings talking with the elders of the mountain villages, eating meals prepared with ingredients fresh from our hosts' gardens, and building a connection with the children and their families."

—Marj Savage, U employee and Global Volunteer

Dave Floren: Thinking outside the bag

by Mary Shafer

Just back from a trip to the Boundary Waters, Dave Floren (B.A. '64 journalism) is the picture of quiet contentment. For a few months now, he's been reading good books and spending time with his family and, he muses, "getting my head up, looking around, and figuring out what I want to do next."

Although he retired April 30 as president of Martin Williams Advertising, Inc., Floren expects the next phase of his life to include more than golf outings. He may not yet know what his next mission will be, but he believes that "when the time comes, I'll know."

Little in his laid-back demeanor would suggest his highly successful 37-year career, which culminated in the 1996-97 School of Journalism and Mass Communication (SJMC) Alumni Award of Excellence. In the professional community, he is considered one of Minnesota's most respected and influential advertising executives.

Floren would have you believe it's all been serendipity. When he came to the University in 1960, he says, he was a "kid who wandered out of the cornfields of Becker County," with no particular goals in mind. He soon realized that he would either sink or swim on the enormous campus. And so he decided to get serious.

Then, he says, a friend "told me that journalism had the fewest graduation requirements." Lo and behold, Floren discovered that he liked journalism, especially advertising. As chance would have it, the school also happened to be among the highest-ranking journalism schools in the country.

After graduating from the U, Floren went to General Electric, where he worked as a copywriter in the company's advertising management program, in "garden spots like Cleveland and Schenectady." He returned to the Twin Cities in 1966 and in 1968 began at Martin Williams, a fledgling company with seven employees. When he retired, the number had grown to 335—a remarkable record of growth in a notoriously cutthroat business.

Although he is widely believed to be the primary engine of that growth, Floren is modest about his role. "If you hang around long enough, you survive," he says. "I was extremely lucky. I worked with brilliant, wonderful people."

He also encouraged a business culture that promoted both business success and a family life away from work, a philosophy that amounted to being committed to "two diametrically opposed ideas" at the same time, he says. And he kept his finger on the public pulse. "The audience will tell you what to do," says Floren. "You do the research and you find out what they're telling you. There's no deep and dark mystery. We just scramble to keep up with what consumers are telling us."

Enter the University.

"Basic, critical thinking is the primary skill you need," he says. "Technology—which has changed the ad business enormously—has accentuated that. If a client comes to you with a problem and you can't think your way out of a paper bag, you're in trouble. The U taught me how to think things through, how to think strategically. There's no replacement for this. If you want to go into this field, my

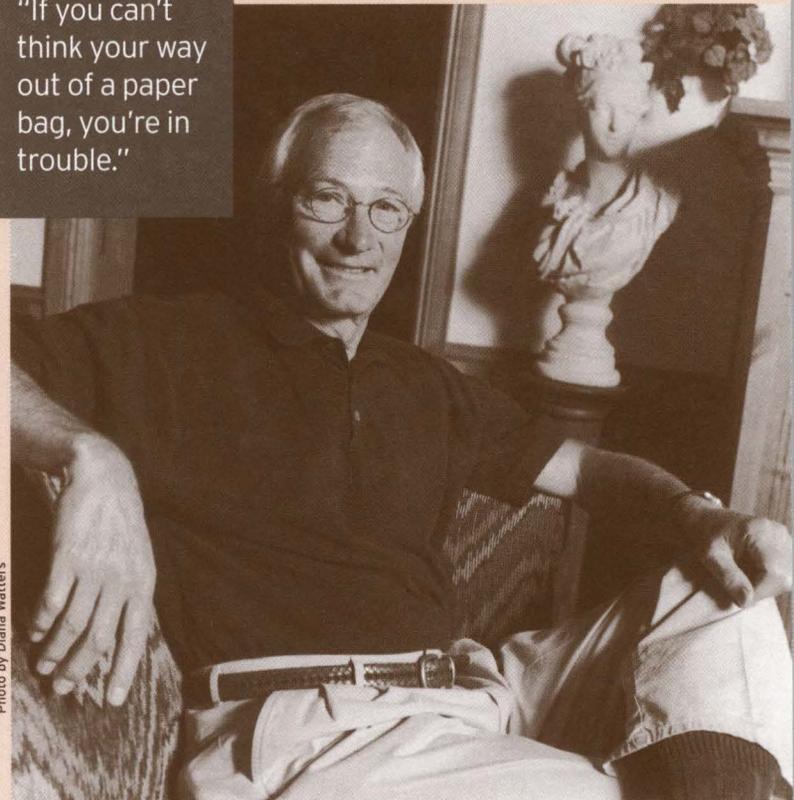
advice is to go to the U. Get as broad a liberal education as possible."

Floren sees his gift to the SJMC as "payback . . . on an investment in CLA and journalism. I realize now, but didn't know then, that the education opportunities laid before me were extraordinary."

These days, advertisers must be constantly on their toes to get through to their audiences, Floren believes. "Consumers are savvier, more intelligent. They adopt a filtering process that is ever more difficult to get through. So your message has to be really creative, really on target."

And the biggest challenge today? "Finding qualified people," Floren says without a moment's hesitation. "I'd look for someone with enormous curiosity, someone with a broad liberal arts background.

"If you can't think your way out of a paper bag, you're in trouble."



Dave Floren

You're ahead of the game if you rest on a broad foundation. The other stuff you can pick up."

Meanwhile, "it was time" to take a sabbatical, says Floren, whose six children include two still in elementary school. "There's an old Norwegian proverb that says you shouldn't keep a dog and bark yourself. If you're the CEO, you should have been raising a generation of managers to manage without you. Besides, after 37 years with my head in the harness, I really did want to take a year and kind of raise my head and see what else is going on."

by Jessica Breed

Luises come home to the U...

again and again



Nita and Rick Luis

Photo by Diana Watters

If you think Nita Luis (B.A. '74, history; J.D. '77) looks familiar, you've probably seen her at a University event. Even if you don't instantly recognize her beaming smile, you may have read about her in an issue of *M*, or visited with her or her husband Rick Luis (J.D. '74) at a women's hockey or men's basketball game. Perhaps you bumped into her while lobbying for the University at the state capitol, sat next to her at a Critical Dialogue, or saw her last time you visited the McNamara Alumni Center.

She's served on the executive board of the CLA Alumni Society for the last six years and is described by CLA Dean Steven Rosenstone as "one of our college's most loyal ambassadors." Benefactors as well, Nita and Rick Luis have given generously of their time, money, and energy. Their gifts for scholarships will allow future generations of students to enjoy the educational excellence the Luises have helped to sustain with their unflagging support.

Nita Luis says that when she first became involved as an alumna in 1984, she was thrilled to be back on campus and to be "thinking about liberal arts in a way that had been unexamined. Of course

you lived them but you didn't really think what liberal arts meant until coming back to the college. To be part of that conversation again, to discover that some favorite professors were still around and you knew your way around campus for the most part—it really was like coming home."

As associate general counsel for United Health Group, Luis credits much of her professional success and personal happiness to her undergraduate education. Though she didn't always know where it would take her, she never had any doubts about earning a liberal arts degree: "I was a history major and I had no idea what I was going to do with it. But I loved history, and I let the job market take care of itself afterwards."

After graduating and working for the State of Minnesota for two years, she enrolled in the Law School. "There weren't many women role models," she says, but she met her future husband, Rick Luis. "We were introduced by a friend under the premise that I could tell her what she was getting into. But we didn't talk too much about law that night," says Rick, laughing. In the summer of 1977, Nita passed the bar exam and the couple married.

Rick Luis, an administrative law judge for the State Office of Administrative Hearings, shares Nita's interests in volunteering and world travel. Says she, "We like to travel anywhere we haven't been before. Our only rule is to avoid war, pestilence, and famine."

Yet they don't avoid political turmoil. Arriving in South Africa just after Nelson Mandela's release from prison and just before his election to office, the Luises met with legal officials who were swept up in radical changes. "We were told this law had changed three months ago, that one had changed six months ago, and this one was being changed," they recall. "It was a very heady time."

As lifelong students, the Luises do their homework beforehand to make the most of their travels, such as a recent trip to Turkey. "I can't imagine going to Turkey without knowing who Atatürk is," says Nita.

And sometimes, they bring a professor along. Political science professor emeritus John Turner recalls accompanying the Luises and a group of attorneys to the former Soviet Union. "They were wonderful travel partners," Turner says, "both curious and civil. I always enjoy spending time with alumni."

Nita Luis agrees that the people are the greatest benefit of getting back in touch with the U. "Working on University things attracts interesting people," she says. "I've really enjoyed my interaction with board members in CLA and UMAA. And it's fun to become reacquainted with former professors as peers and friends." She even shared the Northrop stage recently with a favorite professor, Theofanis Stavrou, when she spoke at commencement.

In tribute to her work as an alumni leader and volunteer, the University gave Nita Luis a "Hats Off" Award last year. She says volunteering is well worth it. Adds Rick, "Just being along for the ride and seeing the University's mushrooming support—it's been a very satisfying experience to observe and participate as much as we can."

Campaign Capsules

Support for CLA builds strong faculty

FROM
**MARY
HICKS,**
DIRECTOR OF
DEVELOPMENT

UPDATE UPDATE UPDATE UPDATE UPDATE UPDATE

Where there's a will...

The National Committee on Planned Giving recently released findings from its 2000 survey of donors. The study found that as many as seven out of ten adults will die without a will. Of those who did have a will, only eight percent included a charitable bequest for an organization, and of those, only one in three had notified the charity of her or his plans. All of this spells lost opportunity for both individuals and their favorite organizations.

I was reminded of this recently when chatting with an old friend—I'll call him "Sid"—who was grieving the death of his favorite Aunt Gladys.

Gladys was married for 65 years to Sid's Uncle Harold, who had died five years earlier. He had worked in the insurance business, she as an executive secretary to a senior manager in a major corporation. Retired after 40 years, they traveled, volunteered, ushered at U of M campus events, and, in the winter, escaped to Arizona. They had no children.

Gladys died without a will. She and Harold had been deeply committed to supporting their congregation, homeless shelters, animal protection programs, the arts, and education—the University of Minnesota in particular. But with no legal heirs, her considerable estate became the property of the state. Harold and Gladys could have left a powerful legacy to the causes or institutions they had cared about. As it turned out, they did not.

After a similar experience in my own family, I had done some research. I told Sid that Gladys's case was typical, that most Americans die without ever writing a will. (This is especially true for people under 50.) This represents many millions of dollars annually, a windfall to the federal and state treasuries. Administered by the state, the money might ultimately find its way into good hands and worthy causes—but through serendipity, not by design.

LEAVING A LEGACY

A will or, alternatively, a living trust, allows you to divide and distribute your estate as you see fit, while also reducing the tax burden to you and your heirs. You, not the state, will decide how your estate is to be disbursed.

If you die without a will and are survived by a spouse and children, your property will be divided among them. Others, such as surviving parents, siblings, or domestic partners, receive nothing. With a will, you can make provision for an aging parent, a favorite niece or nephew, a life partner, or a dear friend. And you also can provide for charitable donations—and a lasting legacy—to causes and institutions that are near and dear to your heart.

Making a provision in your will to benefit CLA students and faculty is fairly simple. You may designate a particular dollar amount or a certain percentage of your estate. You also may stipulate that your charitable gift is to be made only after provisions for your heirs have been fulfilled. And you may either specify a particular use for the gift or make a discretionary gift, to support the college's priorities and be used where the need is greatest. Once you make your philanthropic decisions, you should notify your favored charity. If you intend to leave a legacy to CLA, we want to be able to thank you, now, not your heirs, after you're gone.

Of course you will want to talk to an attorney first about your plans, but you also may wish to talk with trained financial advisers at the University of Minnesota Foundation. If you want to discuss how you can leave a legacy to the college, we would love to hear from you. Just call us at 612-625-5031.—*Mary Hicks*

CAMPAIGN  MINNESOTA

FACULTY CHAIRS AND PROFESSORSHIPS

A strong and talented faculty deeply committed to intellectual exploration and discovery and to the development and enrichment of their students and their communities: This is the heart and soul of a great University.

That is why faculty support is such an important part of Campaign Minnesota.

THE POWER OF NAMING

By establishing a named faculty chair you can support a program you care deeply about while also paying tribute to a revered faculty or staff member, community leader, notable alumna or alumnus, family member, or esteemed friend.

The named chair or professorship not only ensures a faculty position in perpetuity but also confers honor and prestige on the chair holder, supports important research, and elevates the stature of the department and the college.

Many thanks to those of you who have given so generously to support the wonderful faculty of CLA!

"There's an old joke that the exam questions in economics stay the same from year to year—only the answers change. And it's true! A lot of what I learned in advanced courses has been either moved to elementary courses, or found to be wrong. Teaching dies unless it is based on research, and the college that doesn't expect research from its faculty is offering a dead curriculum. On the other hand, research is continually stimulated by probing questions in the classroom. The two offer a perfect example of symbiosis."

—*Edward Foster, professor & chair,
Department of Economics*

University Archives
218 Andersen Library

Faculty chairs talk about... *why your gifts matter*

Chaired members of the faculty give back in their classrooms and the broader community in myriad ways. They leave an indelible mark on the intellectual and creative life of the University and the lives of their students. We asked some chairholders about what the chairs meant to them and to the college, and here's what a few of them said.



Photo by Diana Watters

"The benefits of scholarly research and creative activity by CLA faculty do not stop at the University's doors. There are countless examples of the University's impact on the larger community—from sound public policy to stronger neighborhoods to more engaged citizens to educational and arts programs and events that enrich the cultural life of the region."

*Mark Snyder,
McKnight Presidential Endowed
Chair in Psychology*

"The Fesler-Lampert Chair allows me to put my heart and soul into my teaching and creative work. I have come to think of it as the 'fairy godmother' award."

*Madelon Sprengnether, Fesler-Lampert Chair in
Humanities, Professor of English;
Director, Creative
Writing Program*



Photo by Geoffrey Kroll



Photo by Diana Watters

"A liberal education ought to help prepare the next generation to understand the relationship between the highest ideals of the American democratic experiment and the modern university. I think teaching means helping students to understand the social stakes of knowledge and to understand the relationship between knowledge and responsibility. At a time when universities are increasingly under pressure to focus resources on what is in essence the future of the job market, goals associated with ethics and international citizenship tend to get backseat attention. We need to refocus on the ideals for which universities exist, ideals of good citizenship."

*Richard Leppert, Samuel Russell Chair in the Humanities, Distinguished University
Teaching Professor, Cultural Studies and Comparative Literature*