

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

reach

COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS

WINTER 2008



Caught

**in a borderless world:
Where do we draw the lines?**

FROM THE INTERIM DEAN

Uncommon bonds

Since last fall, I have had the pleasure of serving as interim dean of the College of Liberal Arts. Stepping into the shoes of former dean Steven Rosenstone (now Vice President for Scholarly and Cultural Affairs)—whose distinguished and visionary leadership in his 11 years as dean has left enormous footprints—has been not only an honor, but also a humbling opportunity to experience on a grander scale what this college is all about.

The liberal arts are often called the heart of the University. Indeed, the liberal arts foster critical thinking, expose students to a diversity of viewpoints, and are fundamental to any sort of higher-level education. I also believe that it is vitally important in this century for a liberal arts education to develop global citizens.

As this century has unfolded—especially since 9/11—it has become increasingly essential that American leaders and Americans in general understand how U.S. political, social, economic, and cultural institutions and values intersect with those of other countries around the world. Liberal arts education—as a repository and purveyor of social and cultural knowledge; of languages, literatures,



KELLY MACWILLIAMS

and the arts; and of history and philosophy, including knowledge of the world's religions—is exactly the foundation needed by the next generation of Americans who will navigate those intersections.

9/11 awakened us to our global responsibilities and reminded us of the need for the expert knowledge that only the liberal arts can provide. We wanted people who read and understood Arabic, who knew something about the Middle East, about history and philosophy and religion, about world cultures and global geo-politics. Every internationally minded firm these days wants not only people with business expertise but also those who are culturally competent in the broadest sense.

As CLA steps up to this challenge, we understand that such a broad liberal arts education for the next generation of citizens means moving beyond our own academic homes. To be sure, academic disciplines matter. But as we educate our students to be global citizens, we also know that one of our most important contributions as scholars and teachers will be to cross traditional academic boundaries to collaborate and make connections with other disciplines, as well as with other communities within and beyond the University.

The Latin motto on our University's Board of Regents seal—"commune vinculum omnibus artibus"—reminds us that "a common bond unites all fields of knowledge." We have paid homage to that motto for generations. But now, in the 21st century and for this college, it is an ideal that we must actively embrace.

—James A. Parente, Jr.
Interim Dean

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James A. Parente, Jr." followed by a stylized flourish.

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Michael Goldman draws a conceptual line in the shifting sands of cultural, political, and geographic borders. Photo by John Noltner

reach

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field

OF INQUIRY

TEST RESULTS

BY DANNY LACHANCE

Clear your desk, sharpen your #2 pencil, and choose the BEST answer. The results of graduate school entrance exams...

- (a) effectively predict grades earned in graduate school.
- (b) often predict the likelihood of success in graduate school better than undergraduate grades do.
- (c) effectively predict markers of success other than grades, like the chances of passing a professional licensing exam or publishing research that is cited by other researchers.
- (d) all of the above.

It's (d), says assistant professor of psychology Nathan Kuncel. In collaboration with Sarah Hezlett, senior research scientist at Personnel Decisions Research Institutes, Kuncel analyzed the data provided by over 3,000 studies of standardized tests used by the admissions committees of graduate programs—everything from the GRE to the LSAT to the GMAT. In what is one of the largest meta-analyses ever undertaken, synthesizing data collected from nearly a million students over multiple decades, the two found that good scores on these exams correlated with success—in many forms—in graduate school and beyond.

Their findings, published in *Science* last February, come after nearly 80 years of debate about whether standardized tests are biased against women and minorities, whose scores in some areas lag behind those of



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Sarah Hezlett and Nathan Kuncel

their male and white counterparts. Breaking down the data, Kuncel and Hezlett determined that the tests are as accurate at predicting success for minorities and women as they are for test-takers as a whole.

“The tests aren’t at fault. It would be great, actually, if it was as simple as bad tests,” Kuncel says, for then the skills gap indicated by the tests could be dismissed as a distortion of reality rather than a symptom of it.

Instead, entrance exams seem to reflect inequalities created long before students begin filling in bubbles. “The problem seems to be more societal, more ingrained. These tests are quantifying basic content, verbal, and quantitative skills, which people don’t always have equal opportunities to develop. School quality, treatment in the classroom very early on, and other social issues seem to be what’s causing differences in performance,” Kuncel says.

Kuncel hopes that his synthesis of the studies will help to steer discussions of educational inequality away from standardized tests and toward root causes. “It’s ultimately one of those ‘Let’s not shoot the messenger’ situations,” he says. “Let’s spend our energy solving the problem.”

TEENS, SEX AND MENTAL HEALTH



KELLY MACWILLIAMS

but claiming that their mental health will suffer doesn’t seem to be one of them, says Ann Meier, an assistant professor of sociology.

In fact, most teens who have early sex do not become depressed or lose self-esteem as a result, says Meier, who studied more than 8,500 seventh- through twelfth-graders over an 18-month period. In her study, Meier found that those who do suffer negative mental health consequences—about 15 percent of her respondents—tended to be the youngest (girls who had sex before age 15 and boys who had sex before age 14) and those whose relationships were not emotionally close and ended after the sex.

“Being female or younger than the average age at first-time sex among your peers increases the chance of depression, as does a lack of commitment or intimacy within the relationship and what happens to the relationship after first-time sex,” says Meier. “For girls in uncommitted relationships, ending a relationship with sex [involved] has more of an impact on mental health than ending that same relationship if it did not involve sex.”

Even though the majority of teens engaging in early sex do not suffer mental health consequences, “Some do,” Meier says, “and when half of all teens are having sex, that can lead to a

large number in the population [having negative consequences].”

The study could have ramifications as the federal government and states continue to define the role and efficacy of abstinence education in schools. Language contained in the 1996 welfare reform act mandates that schools receiving federal funding for sex education adopt an abstinence curriculum, which teaches, as one of eight guiding points, that sexual activity outside of marriage “is likely to have harmful physical and psychological effects,” Meier says. Meier’s research suggests that the correlation between teen sex and harmful psychological

There may be many legitimate reasons for parents to counsel their teenagers against having sex,

MUSICAL SIGHTS

A picture may be worth a thousand words. But for students in CLA music classes, they are also worth a thousand notes.

BY DANNY LACHANCE

For some, iPods are a sign of detachment, a symbol of how we're increasingly cutting ourselves off from one another in public spaces.

But when Colleen Sheehy, the Weisman Art Museum's program director, sees museum visitors wearing iPods, she smiles rather than cringes. For her, those white ear buds are proof of a novel form of engagement.

The iPods, she explains, contain the winning music compositions from the Museum's ArtSounds contest, an annual competition that she launched

JOHN NOLTNER



with School of Music faculty member Doug Geers two years ago. CLA music faculty encourage students in their courses to craft original music compositions in response to art works in the museum's permanent collection. Winning compositions are then recorded, uploaded to museum-owned iPods, and lent out to patrons, who then can take in a painting's visual call while listening to a student's musical response.

Sheehy is excited about the music's potential to encourage museum goers to give pieces a second—and third, and fourth—look. “There’s a famous maxim in museum work: visitors only look at a piece of art for five seconds,” Sheehy says. But if patrons are looking at artist Wesley Kimler’s painting “Hunter/Prey” while listening to the four-and-a-half minute percussion solo it inspired University undergraduate Joe Millea to create, they may give the piece more attention than it would otherwise get.

“I have walked by that painting and looked at it briefly hundreds of times,” Sheehy says. “And it wasn’t until I was in the gallery and he was playing his piece that I

really looked at it. He really made me aware of its conflicting elements.” It also, she notes, helps communicate to patrons that you don’t need a Ph.D. in art history to interpret art—and that interpretation can take many forms other than the authoritative commentaries often posted on placards next to sculptures and paintings.

Music students, of course, are thrilled to have their work made available to the general public. But they also gain important skills. Beginning students learn to think about how music interacts with physical, visual, and emotional sensations. “The core idea is that we want them to translate a physical art object and the psychological, emotional experience they have looking at that object into a musical response,” says Geers. “It’s engaging their brains in a significantly different way” than writing an analytical essay on a symphony or painting might, he adds.

Advanced music students, meanwhile, are challenged to grow artistically. One of last year’s winners, Josh Clausen, who earned his M.A. last spring from the School of Music, says that he was accustomed to beginning compositions with concepts, emotions, or even

fictional characters in mind. This, he says, was different. “It’s a concrete object. It’s a different platform for discourse, a somewhat more articulate one,” he explains. Since graduation, Clausen has been drawn increasingly toward this newer platform, creating compositions in conjunction with images and video.

Ultimately, Sheehy says, programs like ArtSounds serve as an important reminder that the museum remains rooted in an educational institution, with particular ties to the College of Liberal Arts. They communicate the ethos that museums aren’t just for Picassos of the past. They’re also for Mozarts of the future. They represent the kind of thinking that drives collaborative arts projects in the University’s West Bank Arts Quarter—indeed, that brings artists and scholars of all stripes together across CLA.

“We want visitors from off campus to see that art isn’t just about these works in our collection, but that the University is dedicated to students learning and developing their talents,” Sheehy says—right in front of our eyes.

effects may be less strong than those words imply.

Meier cautions that the study does *not* suggest that first-time sex among teens has positive effects; and she hopes the study will help policy makers focus help on those most vulnerable rather than promoting a one-size-fits-all approach. She also cautions that her study measured symptoms in the teens on a depression scale, but was not meant to diagnose clinical depression. Her study, “Adolescent First Sex and Subsequent Mental Health,” was published in the May 2007 issue of *American Journal of Sociology*.

ADAPTED FROM A STORY BY RICK MOORE, UNIVERSITY RELATIONS



Kathleen Vohs
and Ron Faber

KELLY MACWILLIAMS

SHOP BEFORE YOU DROP

Pooling their expertise, two researchers cast some light on impulse buying BY DANNY LACHANCE

In higher education circles these days, it's fashionable to wax poetic about the importance of interdisciplinary collaborations. The most important discoveries of the twenty-first century, we're told, will be made not by some intrepid soul working in one field, but by teams of researchers who bring different disciplinary perspectives to some of our most perplexing puzzles.

But what does interdisciplinary collaboration actually look like? And how, exactly, does it produce all this touted progress?

Ron Faber and Kathleen Vohs have one answer. He's a CLA researcher in the School of Journalism and Mass Communication. She's a professor of marketing and logistics management in the University's Carlson School of Management.

Collaborating with one another for years, the two have been able to make some unique connections between their respective disciplines and as a result, have increased our understanding of a nearly universal phenomenon: impulse buying.

White bears and empty pockets

Vohs and Faber wanted to know how and why we purchase goods on a whim, and they each had a set of knowledge that, alone, couldn't answer the question properly. "I understood the self-control failure model," Vohs explains, "the psychological theory that we have a limited amount of resources that we can use each day to resist the temptation

for immediate gratification in order to achieve longer term goals. Think of your capacity for self control as a gas tank in a car. When you successfully curb that impulse to devour a 1,000-calorie burrito by reminding yourself of your weight loss goals, you press down on an accelerator, spending a bit of the gas in your tank. The more you control your impulses, the more gas you use. After operating for a long time, people, like cars, run out of gas: they become less able to resist their impulses in order to meet longer-term goals."

But would this theory explain people's behavior when it came to impulse buying? That's where Faber came in.

"I knew I could count on Ron to flesh out the spending, the consumer context in which the model was applied," Vohs said.

The two crafted a series of experiments that tested whether shoppers are more likely to buy impulsively after "spending" self-control resources. Their hunches were correct: Those asked to expend lots of resources by engaging in certain tasks—not thinking about a white bear during a ten-minute writing exercise or ignoring random words that flashed along the bottom of a screen during a boring video—were later more likely to buy products impulsively and to value them at higher dollar amounts when compared to people who were not asked to control themselves.

The results suggest that we're much more likely to buy impulsively after we've spent a good deal of time making choices and regulating our behavior. The implications of the research are numerous, Faber says. "If you don't want to make impulse purchases, break your shopping into shorter trips. Don't do all your shopping at once. If you have a really tough day, don't go shopping," he adds.

Crossing over

One of the key benefits of working with scholars from a different disciplinary background is that they tend to ask new questions and challenge the core assumptions of your own discipline, Vohs says.

"Psychologists consider self control as having a lot to do with persistence. When people show good self control, they persist in the face of struggle or difficult demands," she explains. And when they give up quickly, they are exhibiting poor self control.

Her colleagues in the business school, however, didn't see it that way. When she explained to them how psychologists classify behaviors as signaling low self control, "They said, 'Why is [abandoning a struggle] a sign of low self control rather than good self control? Perhaps these subjects knew where to put their energy in a judicious manner,'" Vohs recounts.

Cross-disciplinary interactions like these, Vohs says, can ultimately lead to the revision of concepts that have been taken for granted for years by specialists in a field. "Ron knows the right questions to ask," says Vohs. "He'll ask, 'Now why do you do it like that?' Those challenges can sometimes lead to major new insights into the fundamental nature of what you're studying."

BUILDING MAKES HIM HAPPY

Graduate student Justin Stewart turns everyday things into award-winning sculpture BY PAULINE OO

When R. Justin Stewart looks at a map, he sees more than a way to get from Point A to Point B. For example, a transit map that shows a bus route can also reveal where people without cars might live. Or a bridge, built to connect one place to another, has an underbelly that can serve as shelter.

Stewart's eye for detail and ability to notice what the rest of us may miss or take for granted is apparent in most, if not all, of his complex and often whimsical mixed-media installations and wall sculptures. Last fall, Stewart received an award for Outstanding Student Achievement in Contemporary Sculpture from the International Sculpture Center, a nonprofit organization founded in 1960 to advance the understanding of sculpture and its contribution to society. He is one of the 21 recipients selected from a pool of 339 college students from five countries—and the first University of Minnesota winner.

"I've never been nominated for anything like this before," says Stewart, an M.F.A. candidate in the U's sculpture program whose name was among two submitted by University assistant professor of art Andrea Stanislav. "I wasn't holding my breath because it's such a big international award. It's a gigantic honor."

His winning piece—a 15 feet-by-8 feet creation called *Connected*, made mostly out of things you can pick up at a hardware store—is part of the Grounds For Sculpture exhibition in Hamilton, New Jersey.

A culmination of three years of work, *Connected* "represents an approach to thinking about networks, systems, and structures," Stewart says, "of how these entities affect each other and the world ... they are connected to and how the new environment they end up in can alter their forms."

The piece also explores the idea of "taking common materials and transforming them into something ... more beautiful than any one of them by themselves," says Stewart.



PATRICK O'LEARY

"I am interested in people asking, 'What is that? It looks familiar, but I'm not sure what it is.' And [after seeing my work], they notice, say, the pipe outside the building that looks like something I used inside A good piece of art prods you to think."

Stewart was no child prodigy growing up in Waukesha, Wisconsin. Instead, the lively artist candidly admits not valuing art until his sophomore year in high school.

"My football coach was the ceramics teacher," says Stewart. "I thought, 'It's ceramics; how hard could that be?' But I really fell in love with making things, and then from there, I went on to art school. Art school completely transformed my way of thought. It blew open my world."

Today, Stewart works six days a week as an artist, in addition to being a fulltime art student, teaching assistant, and faculty research assistant at the University. He is currently working on three projects related to the Minneapolis-St. Paul bus system. He graduates from the University in May, and then it's off to New York with his fiancée.

"Sure, it's hard to break in there," he says, "but it's hard everywhere. My goal isn't at all to make it big. That'll be great if it happens, but my goal is to continue pushing myself to do things that I'm interested in.

faculty

Leonid Hurwicz (Regents Professor Emeritus, economics) won the 2007 Nobel Prize in Economics, sharing the prize with economists Eric Maskin, Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton; and Roger Myerson, U of Chicago. Building on Hurwicz's early groundwork, the three developed "mechanism design theory," which helps explain situations in which markets work and others in which they don't. Hurwicz received his law degree in Poland in 1938; he joined the U faculty in 1951.

Andrew Scheil (English) and **Wilma Koutstaal** (psychology) were named McKnight Presidential Fellows ... **Allen Isaacman** (Regents Professor of History, cofounder of the MacArthur Interdisciplinary Program on Global Change, Sustainability and Justice) received the U's 2007 Award for Global Engagement ... **Craig Swan** (emeritus, economics, and vice provost for undergraduate education) was named an honorary member of the U's Academy of Distinguished Teachers ... **Paula Rabinowitz** (English) is the 2008 CLA Dean's Medalist ... **V.V. Charl** (economics), **Richa Nagar** (gender, women, & sexuality studies), and **Wayne Potratz** (art) were named 2008 Scholars of the College ... **Robert Kvavik** (political science and associate vice president for planning) was appointed Knight First Class of the Royal Norwegian Order of Merit for his promotion of research and university collaboration between the United States and Norway.

cyber optic

to find out more about these faculty members, visit www.cla.umn.edu/faculty

YUICHIRO ONISHI
IS CHANGING THE
WAY WE THINK
ABOUT RACE.

BY DANNY LACHANCE

Ring Shouter

A warehouse job wasn't at all what Yuichiro Onishi envisioned for himself years ago when he decided to move back to Japan shortly after his graduation from Macalester College. As a 12-year-old, he had left Japan when he moved with his parents to the United States. His plan as a 22-year-old was to return and rediscover his native land. With a B.A. from a good U.S. college and fluency in Japanese, he figured, he could find a professional entry-level position of some sort and experience Japan as a young urban professional.

But when the plane landed and the dust settled, such jobs were nowhere to be found. Instead, Onishi found work in a Kawasaki warehouse slapping price tags onto fabrics. The days were long and the work monotonous. Today, though, Onishi says he's grateful for that blue-collar Japanese work experience because that's what pushed him to pursue a career as a scholar of African American studies. Now a faculty member in African American & African studies and Asian American studies, Onishi recalls how his coworkers would make disparaging remarks about Southeast Asians living in Japan. "They'd say that these workers had dirty, hard, and painful lives, and 'we are not like them,'" Onishi recalls. Those remarks struck him as something more than just nationalism. They were, he wanted to say, racist—an expression of white supremacy.


To people who think of race as biologically based and Southeast Asians as sharing a common racial denominator with the Japanese, such a suggestion might seem ludicrous. How could Japanese disgust at Filipinos be called racist? Xenophobic, maybe. But racist?

But as an undergraduate, Onishi had learned that race was far more complicated than simple biological classification. Path breaking work by scholars like former University of Minnesota professor David Roediger has shown that our biological lineage has sometimes borne very little relation to how others perceive us racially. Reading Roediger's book *The Wages of Whiteness* between shifts at the warehouse, Onishi was learning that in the 19th century, Irish immigrants were initially not considered white by Anglo Saxons who had been living in North America for generations. They had to prove their status as white—often at the expense of black people. "These European immigrant workers became white at the expense of blacks," Onishi explains. "They would distance themselves from blacks by saying, 'We're not like that. We're not like slaves; we're wage workers.'"

It's a pattern that historians have documented in numerous instances. Historically, Onishi says, "race has less to do with color than with politics and power." Those in power have often manufactured and assigned racial categories to people, often illogically, in order to dominate them socially, politically, and economically.



JOHN NOLTNER



Convinced that what he had witnessed in his coworkers was tied up in this global history of race, Onishi wondered how the Japanese had been perceived racially on the world stage. How did people of color in the United States think about the racial identity of the Japanese people? To find some answers, Onishi enrolled in the Ph.D. program in history at Minnesota, where he studied the relationship between African Americans and Japanese people during the period between World War I and World War II. He began to detect an important, shared sense of racial solidarity between the Japanese and African Americans.

When it comes to race, Onishi says, Japan occupies a unique and contradictory position in the world. Its history of dominating other Asian peoples and countries parallels European and U.S. histories of imperialism, colonialism, and racialization in Africa, Asia, and the Americas, he notes. In a sense, Japan had a white polity and transformed those it dominated—Koreans, Filipinos, Chinese—into nonwhite peoples.

But what most fascinated Onishi were those instances when Japanese and African Americans recognized their commonalities. After World War I, Japan demanded that President Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points plan include a racial equality clause. That failed effort sparked the imaginations of black intellectuals and leaders in the United States, who had come to see their struggle as global, not just national. By pointing to the amendment's failure as an instance of U.S. racism on the global stage, black leaders were able to imagine possibilities of cross-national alignment with other people of color.

Indeed, when black intellectual and leader W.E.B. Du Bois toured Japan in the winter of 1936, he came across a series of woodblocks depicting the arrival, by sea, of Commodore Matthew Perry, the United States' first envoy in the 1850s. But instead of noting, as most historians would, the coming modernization of Japan, Du Bois saw something different.

"He noted that black sailors accompanied these expeditions. For him, that event wasn't the beginning of modern Japan, but the beginning of the coming unity between Asia and Africa," Onishi contends.

Those feelings of solidarity didn't just flow in one direction. During the U.S. occupation of Japan following World War II, blacks and whites living in the city of Kobe had to live in segregated camps. "Japanese people witnessed a Jim Crow military even as they were being taught, by the occupation authority-led education system, about the universality of American democracy," Onishi explains. Japanese intellectuals, meanwhile, were reading about the troubled history of race in the United States—in the translated writings of W.E.B. Du Bois and Richard Wright. In 1954, a group of them came together to form *Kokujin Kenkyu no Kai*, or Association of Negro Studies—an organization that still exists 53 years later.

DANCING ACROSS RACIAL DIVIDES

By uncovering the lost history of racial solidarity that transcended oceans, nations, and actual skin color, Onishi hopes to help his students see that race isn't a fixed category. Because we've created race as a construct, we can reshape it in ways that unify rather than divide people. And the classroom, Onishi says, is where that change can begin.

Several centuries ago, American slaves from different parts of Africa created a racial identity for themselves despite their myriad languages, religions, and ethnicities. They found common ground in the Ring Shout, says Onishi—a dance that occurred in various forms across the African continent's vast cultural divides. "They performed the Ring Shout in the New World, and it became a language through which they forged racial solidarity. They became African and black," Onishi explains.

Onishi sees his classroom as a Ring Shout for the 21st century, a place where students can dance with one another through their words and ideas. It's a dance, he hopes, that just might forge among them a new racial identity, one rooted in shared values and objectives rather than differences of color or national origin.

To the mainstream eye, this notion of students with beige, brown, and black skin sharing a racial identity may seem be impossible—pie-in-the-sky, even. But not to Onishi. "The study of race is in many ways hopeful for me," he says, thinking about the utopian potential of the classroom. "Because it's a social construct, we can change it. We can reconstruct it." ∞

It's Beautiful

CLA GRAD JEFF BAUER IS HELPING TO CHANGE LIVES THROUGH ART

BY MARY SHAFER

I have imagined this journey for months, and now I am a physical body hurtling through the sky over the arid plains of Chad. Back in Minneapolis, the other me is picking up Thai take-out for dinner, stopping by the bank, and driving home at this very moment. He is thinking about what he will watch on television tonight. He is trying to settle his mind down after a busy day at work so he can close his eyes and sleep. But I am not he. I am here and my eyes are wide open.

—FROM THE JOURNAL OF JEFF BAUER, EN ROUTE TO THE REPUBLIC OF CHAD, 2006

It's a cold morning in November and the radiators haven't kicked in yet in Jeff Bauer's Loring Park office. No matter. Heat fairly jumps from the huge, vibrant, richly textured purple, green, and yellow paintings here and on the walls that lead to the artist's studio down the hall. The studio itself bursts with more works by Pam Sukhum, Bauer's partner here at Infinite Vision Foundation, where Bauer is founder and president.

Sukhum's art is glorious, but she is not the only one whose works are on display. Nestled among her bold paintings are smaller colored-pencil sketches, whose artists have names like Ali and Deffa and Omar. These artists are children, and they have drawn warplanes raining missiles and soldiers aiming guns at people the children have known as friends or neighbors—or parents.

The drawings take your breath away. And that, says Bauer, is the point.

JEFF BAUER, GAGA REFUGEE CAMP, 2006:

Ali asks me a lot of questions: about America, about my job, about my brother, about girls, about art. It is through these questions that we become friends. Yet, in all of our conversations, he never asks me about my parents. Here in Gaga camp, I know what this usually means. There is an entire history hidden in the silence of Gaga's questions that need not be asked because the answers are already understood. But I have to ask—maybe selfishly I need to know. I regret the words before I even speak them:

"Ali, are your parents here with you?"

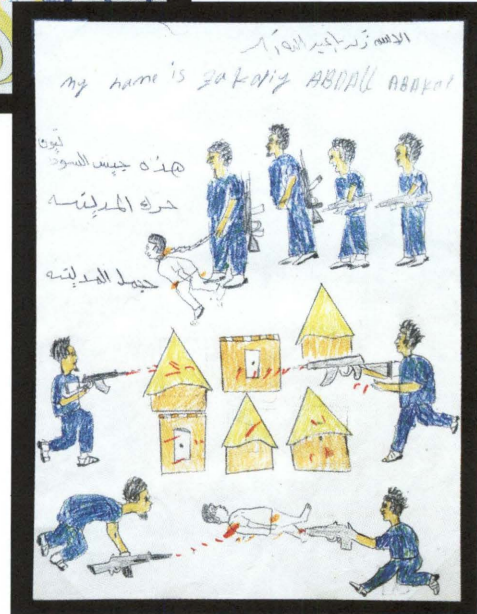
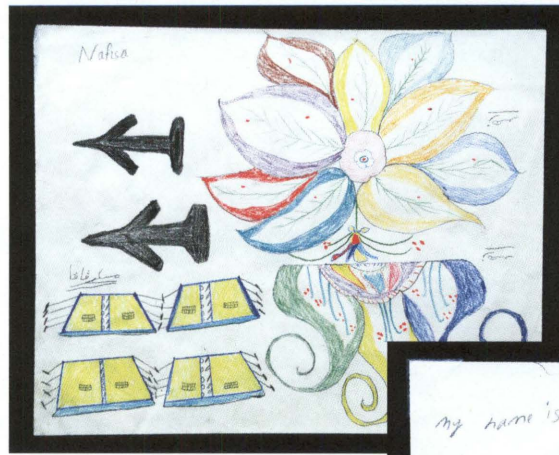
His eyes drop to the floor and the smile disappears from his face.

"No parents."

This is all he will ever say about it, and all I will ever ask.

Hundreds of thousands of refugees from Sudan and the Central African Republic have fled into eastern Chad since 2003. The refugee camps where they now live might be the last places you would expect art to thrive. But Bauer and Sukhum believe that art can not only thrive in these camps, but actually transform and help heal decimated lives. Indeed, they have witnessed that very thing.

At first glance, Bauer and Sukhum look like unlikely business partners. Bauer, with his 1997 B.A. in political science from the University and a master's degree in public policy from the Humphrey Institute, has the project ability. He has raised funds, designed projects, and done grassroots work for causes



as diverse as urban agriculture and political campaigns. And he started the Infinite Vision Foundation in the first place to house a project that would build a school in Viet Nam.

Sukhum, a Carleton College graduate who detoured from her biology degree to pursue her passion for art, has long believed that art can be transformative. After the two met at an Infinite Vision fundraiser, they put their heads—and their strengths—together.

"It started as an idea," says Bauer, "that we could go somewhere where kids are affected by war—not to make a political statement or to take a stand, but to bring back to people the reality of what's going on."

They called it the Beautiful Project and launched it in early 2006 under the Infinite Vision umbrella. By fall of that year, with the support of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)—the UN's refugee agency—they were on their way to the Gaga refugee camp in Chad to teach art to kids who had never even owned colored pencils.



Jeff Bauer and Pamela Sukhum

cyber optic

Learn more about the Infinite Vision Foundation at ivfoundation.org, where you'll also find links to Bauer's complete journal and Sukhum's art.

TERRY FAUST

JEFF BAUER, GAGA REFUGEE CAMP, 2006:

Pam steps to the front of the class while the students wait silently. "Today's activity has two parts," she explains. "For the first part, I want you to draw something that makes you scared or sad—maybe something you have seen or experienced—anything. If this part is hard for you, don't worry. The second part will be better. You can start now."

[The teacher] Mustapha translates Pam's words, and asks the students if they understand, to which they give their customary response:

"Yes, teacher, we understand."

But no one moves. No one speaks or moves to pick up a pencil.

... A hand goes up at the back of the class. Asaid, one of the older boys, hesitantly stands up to ask his question.

"They want to know is it okay if we draw about Sudan."

"Of course it is. You can draw anything you want."

"Thank you, teacher."

The classroom instantly bursts to life as the students clamor for pencils and shout back and forth to each other. Pam looks over with a disbelieving smile and throws her hands in the air. An outside observer encountering the scene

might think we had just announced a sledding trip in the middle of Africa from all of the energy bouncing between the walls. But, in fact, what they would be encountering is the euphoria of release, the relief of all at once sharing, and therefore unburdening oneself from, something that been trapped inside.

The pictures they draw are devastating, searing recreations of their exodus from Sudan—janjaweed militias slaughtering villages full of men, women, and children, setting butts ablaze with entire families inside, their horses galloping through deep puddles of thick red blood. Up above, Antonov warplanes rain down bombs on the fleeing villagers, leaving charred black craters filled with corpses and limbs. Their renditions are painstakingly executed, illustrating the exact locations of wounds, and even the intricate details of the Kalishnikov machine guns carried by the janjaweed soldiers...

"How was the first part?" Pam is back at the front of the class, "Was it difficult?"

"Yes, teacher. It was difficult."

Devastation is not the only thing they will draw throughout the next few days. Sukhum will encourage them to take the pictures they have drawn and transform them into something that makes them happy. Eventually, flowers and vines full of leaves and fruit sprout from the burning villages. Animals appear. Children hold hands. At the end of the six days, there is a graduation ceremony—and each student receives a box of colored pencils.

Impressed by their work, the UNHCR invited Bauer and Sukhum to expand the project to additional camps, and in March, the children's work was exhibited at Art Expo New York. Last fall, Bauer and Sukhum went to Camp Gondjie in southern Chad to work the same kind of miracles.

"These kids have been through every imaginable horror," says Bauer. "Their art is transformational for all of us. Just saying 'this should stop' is only half the battle. When I'm with the children, I'm not thinking about what I'm for or against, but just being part of a beautiful thing. To me, this has more potential to affect people's lives than if I gave a bunch of speeches about right and wrong. This is less like a crusade and more like fully living my life." ∞

To find material for his dissertation on art and politics, graduate student Adam Bahner can simply look in the mirror

BY DANNY LACHANCE

RAIN MAN

Adam Bahner loves to throw a question back at the reporters from across the world who have interviewed him in recent months.

From Australia to Omaha, they call him to learn more about the guy whose music videos on YouTube have transformed him from an American Studies Ph.D. student at the University of Minnesota into one of the most listened-to songwriters in the world. And they always seem to begin their interviews by asking him, “What inspires you to sing?”

His reply: “What inspires you to be silent?”

It’s a response that makes sense when you know that Bahner is a fourth-year doctoral student about to begin work on a dissertation examining the relationship between art and social and political change. He’s convinced that art can make waves in a society, but he also thinks a lot of obstacles prevent it from doing so. One of them is people’s failure to see themselves as artists.

“I think it’s natural to sing,” he says. “People sing in the car. Most people sing in the shower. Most people sing to themselves when no one else is watching. *Silence* is not normal. Silence is problematic.”

Bahner found his own silence deafening. So with the help of amateur recording equipment in a corner of his Dinkytown apartment, he catapulted himself to fame last summer by filming himself performing original songs and uploading the finished products to the Internet under the stage name Tay Zonday. By last October, his song “Chocolate Rain”—a haunting five-minute loop of thinly veiled political commentary on the state of race relations in the United States—had been viewed more than 10 million times on YouTube, elicited nearly 100,000 comments from viewers, and been the subject of hundreds of parodies and tributes.

Before long, Bahner was making guest appearances on *Jimmy Kimmel Live!* and appearing on the cover of the *Los Angeles Times*’ Sunday arts section. He was flown to Chicago to perform in the Optimus block party.

Google invited him to perform at its annual Zeitgeist Party at the “Googleplex” in California. John Mayer covered “Chocolate Rain” on VH1’s *Best Week Ever*. And in October, Bahner gave his first concert as an opener for the band Girl Talk at First Avenue in Minneapolis, the nightclub that has been the stomping ground of artists like Prince in their early years—and a stage many musicians don’t see until they’ve paid their dues at much smaller venues.

Much of this attention has resulted from Bahner’s failure to fit into boxes. He comes from a racially mixed background, and his deep bass voice seems an unlikely counterpoint to his baby face. “I’m this voice-body mismatch,” he explains. “I have this gender aesthetic that people might identify as boyish at best. If I was speaking like [teen heartthrob] Aaron Carter, nobody would think twice about my appearance.”

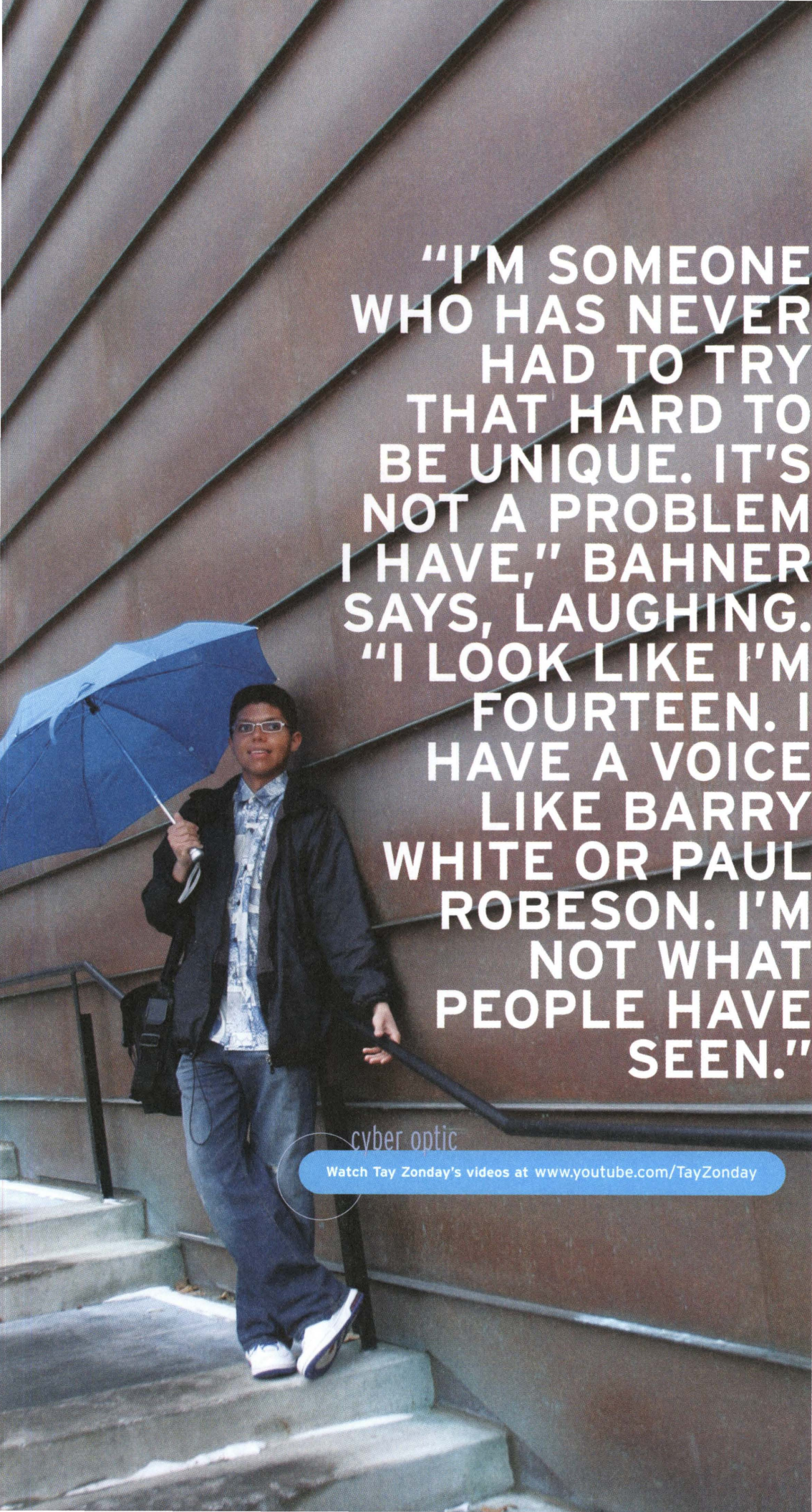
But Bahner’s physical anomalies and ambiguities are only part of the story. “Chocolate Rain” seemed to strike a chord with those who are dissatisfied with how our national dialogues about racism focus on the racist speech of figures like Don Imus and Michael Richards. In his lyrics, Bahner points to the way race relations inform our everyday lives in less dramatic but equally powerful ways—a person’s move to the other side of the street when she or he encounters a black man; the higher insurance rates that homeowners pay in predominantly black neighborhoods; the knee-jerk backlash black people encounter when they blame inequality on racial bias.

Part of the response, Bahner says, may come from the way his voice-body mismatch and racial indeterminacy unsettle our understandings about the categories we take for granted, like race and gender. His own characteristics make the content of “Chocolate Rain” all the more powerful and political.

By giving us access to perspectives and people who undermine, rather than affirm, our ways of seeing the world, YouTube “undermines the power of naming and branding,” Bahner says. The resulting disorientation can create backlash—and, indeed, Bahner has received racist, homophobic, and downright cruel responses to his music. But disorientation, he says, can also be a catalyst for political change.

“The question used to be ‘the ballot or the bullet,’” he says, invoking Malcolm X’s philosophy for empowering black people. “Now it’s more like the ballot or the beatbox, the ballot or the open mic, the ballot or the play.” He pauses, to catch his breath. And then he laughs.

“It’s the ballot or YouTube.” ∞



"I'M SOMEONE WHO HAS NEVER HAD TO TRY THAT HARD TO BE UNIQUE. IT'S NOT A PROBLEM I HAVE," BAHNER SAYS, LAUGHING. "I LOOK LIKE I'M FOURTEEN. I HAVE A VOICE LIKE BARRY WHITE OR PAUL ROBESON. I'M NOT WHAT PEOPLE HAVE SEEN."

cyber optic

Watch Tay Zonday's videos at www.youtube.com/TayZonday

CHOCOLATE RAIN
By Tay Zonday

Chocolate Rain
Some stay dry and others feel the pain

Chocolate Rain
A baby born will die before the sin

Chocolate Rain
The school books say it can't be here again

Chocolate Rain
The prisons make you wonder where it went

Chocolate Rain
Build a tent and say the world is dry

Chocolate Rain
Zoom the camera out and see the lie

Chocolate Rain
Forecast to be falling yesterday

Chocolate Rain
Only in the past is what they say

Chocolate Rain
Raised your neighborhood insurance rates

Chocolate Rain
Makes us happy livin in a gate

Chocolate Rain
Made me cross the street the other day

Chocolate Rain
Made you turn your head the other way

(Chorus)

Chocolate Rain
quickly crashing through your veins' history

Chocolate Rain
Using you to fall back down again
[Repeat]

Chocolate Rain
Seldom mentioned on the radio

Chocolate Rain
It's the fear your leaders call control

Chocolate Rain
Worse than swearing worse than calling names

Chocolate Rain
Say it publicly and you're insane

Chocolate Rain
No one wants to hear about it now

Chocolate Rain
Wish real hard it goes away somehow

Chocolate Rain
Makes the best of friends begin to fight

Chocolate Rain
But did they know each other in the light?

Chocolate Rain
Every February washed away

Chocolate Rain
Stays behind as colors celebrate

Chocolate Rain
The same crime has a higher price to pay

Chocolate Rain
The judge and jury swear it's not the face ...

DRINKING
FROM THE

FIRE

These days, medical information and health news coverage is everywhere—online, on television, on magazine covers. But are we parched in the deluge?

BY DANNY LACHANCE

HOSE

In the sentimental 1980s flick *Beaches*, Barbara Hershey plays a character who learns she has cardiomyopathy. She goes to a university library and, hunched over a hardwood table under the dusty light of a green desk lamp, flips through the pages of a medical textbook, trying to find out what, if anything, she can do.

She can't Google treatment options or read online bulletin boards filled with multiple perspectives and disagreements over the limits of medical knowledge. There are no WebMD.coms with articles about her ailment, no online newspaper archives that might contain research reports related to the disease.

With the loss of gatekeepers—those charged with filtering, fact checking, and framing the information that people encounter—we enjoy unparalleled access to the most obscure knowledge, to breaking



Sorting through information "can be like getting a drink from a fire hose," says Gary Schwitzer (depicted here). "There is so much that comes with such force and overwhelming volume."



BRIAN SOUTHWELL

Assistant professor and director of graduate studies in the School of Journalism and Mass Communication

medical news, to unconventional points of view. Such access offers unparalleled opportunities—the chance to stumble upon a condition unknown to your doctor or to gather the latest treatment options in just a few keystrokes.

But it also comes with new risks. When anyone can produce and consume medical knowledge without the mediation of professionals, it becomes increasingly likely that the information we encounter will be inaccurate, misinterpreted, or stripped of its context in ways that can hurt more than help us.

“We are blessed by many information tools and outlets, but it can be like trying to get a drink from a fire hose,” says Gary Schwitzer, an associate professor of journalism and mass communication. “There is so much that comes with such force and such overwhelming volume, the sources of which aren’t always immediately clear.”

As the stream of medical knowledge becomes a deluge, Schwitzer is one of several CLA researchers whose work is helping us learn, in essence, how to have our fire hose—and drink from it, too.

“ALL THAT GLITTERS IS NOT GOLD IN TECHNOLOGY. YOU CAN HAVE TOO MUCH OF A GOOD THING.”

A NOT-ALWAYS-SO-HAPPY MEDIUM

It may not be like a visit to the doctor, but it gets awfully close. When you visit the popular medical information website WebMD.com, you can point to where it hurts: clicking on a graphic representation of a human body part produces a pop-up list of possible ailments, with links to suggested courses of action.

Interactive experiences like this one are the defining feature of the online experience. When we’re online, we’re busy—entering search terms, clicking through menu options, following links. But how does this interactive format affect our ability to process the information we

find online? Brian Southwell, assistant professor and director of graduate studies in the School of Journalism and Mass Communication, decided to find out.

We often think of the Web's interactive nature as a boon: you see what you want to see and can by-pass the dull or the irrelevant. But Southwell hypothesized that the interactivity that makes the Web so appealing might be the very thing that derails our search, interfering with our understanding and retention of the information we find.

In an experiment conducted in collaboration with Mira Lee of Michigan State University, Southwell presented subjects with an interactive and non-interactive version of a documentary program interspersed with public service announcements. One group of subjects had no control over the content they were shown: they had to watch the presentation from beginning to end.

Members of another group, however, had a different experience. In a format that mimicked the Web's interactive environment, they were presented with clickable images of the different segments of the program. While they had to watch all of the segments, they could do so in any order. They were also allowed to fast-forward, stop, pause, and rewind the program.

Interviewing the subjects a week later, Southwell and Lee found that those who interacted more with the content were less able to recall the details of an especially complex public service announcement than those who simply watched the program from start to finish. (Memory differences between groups did not show up for a relatively simple public service announcement, suggesting that the effects increase with the complexity of information.)

"Interaction with user controls introduces yet another set of information with which a person must contend. While such controls likely afford certain pleasures and possibilities, they also introduce a processing burden," the two concluded.

In other words, the bells and whistles of interactive platforms like the Internet can sometimes be a liability: we're so busy clicking that we're forgetting to do other things, like synthesizing, encoding, and storing the information that's popping up before us. "People talk about interactivity as inherently a good thing," Southwell says. "But when it comes down to it, all that glitters is not gold in technology. You can have too much of a good thing."

FINDING THE PERFECT FRAME

However or wherever we acquire health information, understanding and remembering what we learn is only part of the story. Once we've navigated through the menus, clicked on the graphics, and landed in front of some text—a health news story, a set of recommendations for preventing cancer—how do the words we read influence our medical decision making?

That's where Alex Rothman's work comes in. Rothman, a professor of psychology, has spent years studying the kinds of messages that help consumers make good decisions about their health. The wording

of a message, his research suggests, can make the difference between dental appointments kept and missed, between HIV tests taken and avoided, between tumors detected in their early stages and those found only after they've metastasized.

Rothman has focused, in particular, on people's responses to messages promoting healthy behaviors. He's found that when people see a medical procedure as something that could bring bad news—a diagnostic or screening test such as a mammogram, an HIV test, a prostate exam, for example—they are more likely to risk the procedure if they've been warned of the potential losses if they do not have it. "Decision-making work has shown that when faced with loss-framed information, people are more risk-seeking," he says.

In other words, women are more likely to get mammograms, for example, if they hear "breast cancer could kill you if you don't get a regular mammogram" than "a regular mammogram is the best way to stay healthy."

On the other hand, when we see healthy behaviors as relatively risk-free—unlikely to yield bad news—we're more likely to do them when we're told what we'll gain, Rothman says. People are more likely to lather up with sunscreen when they're promised healthy skin than when they're warned of the risks of not doing so; and they are more likely to brush and floss when they are promised a dazzling smile than to do so when they're warned of rotten teeth.

Rothman's work has important implications for people who communicate about health issues—everyone from doctors and dentists to public health officials to reporters working health beats. By framing messages promoting healthy behavior in ways that are tailored to the degree of risk people associate with the behavior, communicators of medical advice can increase the likelihood of compliance.

But that's not as easy as it sounds. "To the extent that there's great consensus, then one message might work," says Rothman. "If we socialize people to think about mammography as an illness-detection behavior, then a message emphasizing the potential consequences of failing to get a mammogram will work pretty uniformly. On the other hand, to the extent that there's diversity in the way that people construe the behavior, then a single message doesn't work well."

Take the dental visit, for example. For Rothman and those whose teeth have seen the sharp side of the dentist's drill, going to the dentist is a screening behavior—there's a risk that they'll get bad news. But for those who have never had a cavity, going to the dentist is a health-affirming behavior, an opportunity to get your teeth cleaned and your smile brightened.

That's why, for behaviors that are likely to be seen differently by different people, personalized communications may ultimately be more effective than one-size-fits-all messaging. So Rothman has been looking recently at the impact of messages on reminder cards. "Within clinics, in theory, you can tailor the reminder card to what you know about your individual patient—especially in the age of

electronic records,” he says. So, for example, if a dentist has a savvy computer program and electronic records, her patients with a history of cavities will receive messages emphasizing the negative consequences of not getting their teeth cleaned, and those without cavities would receive messages emphasizing the benefits of continued dental check-ups. Both groups would end up in her waiting room in high numbers.

Rothman’s findings are a testament to the double-edged nature of the rise of information technology. By enabling hundreds of channels and millions of Web sites, technology fragments us—we’re socialized in hundreds of idiosyncratic media worlds, making one-size-fits-all messages difficult and ineffective. But even as it fragments us, technology has the potential to use our individual differences to get us to act in the same healthy ways.

FORTIFYING THE GATES

As Rothman’s findings have shown, we are closer than ever to knowing what messages best promote public health. But messages can be crafted and framed in ways that produce desirable results only by those who know what works and what doesn’t, and only if those with the knowledge and resources exercise due diligence and make health information and health news as accurate and effective as possible.

In a dramatically changing media landscape, how likely are people to get the messages they need—and in the forms that are most likely to promote individual and collective health?

It’s a question that Gary Schwitzer has been studying for years. The former editor of the Mayo Clinic’s health information Web site (MayoClinic.com) and an associate professor of journalism and mass communications, Schwitzer says that the most traditionally reliable sources—print publications and news broadcasts—are now the most vulnerable to poor reporting. Economic downsizing, often the result of increased competition from the Internet, has led media organizations to cut the amount of original health reporting they do.

“With the corporatization of media, decision makers are finding it easy to make cuts in this vital area,” Schwitzer says. “They may be cutting back on specially trained beats. And yet they might want to show a presence, to make it look like they’re covering health news.”

As a result, Schwitzer says, editors are more receptive to news releases from the public relations departments of pharmaceutical companies, health maintenance organizations, or special interest lobbies. “Those with marketing interests are finding it easier to get their message across in an unfiltered manner,” Schwitzer says.

In August of 2006, WebMD.com posted an article announcing that “an apple (or two) a day may help keep Alzheimer’s away—and fight the effects of aging on the brain.” It wasn’t until seven paragraphs into the story, Schwitzer noted on his blog, that the reporter disclosed that this conclusion was based on the findings of experiments conducted solely with mice.

That kind of reporting is all too common, Schwitzer says. “Caveats, comparisons with existing alternatives, cost information—the real quality of the evidence appears too late” in stories, he explains. “You’re asking for an editor to cut it, or you’re asking the reader to ignore it.”

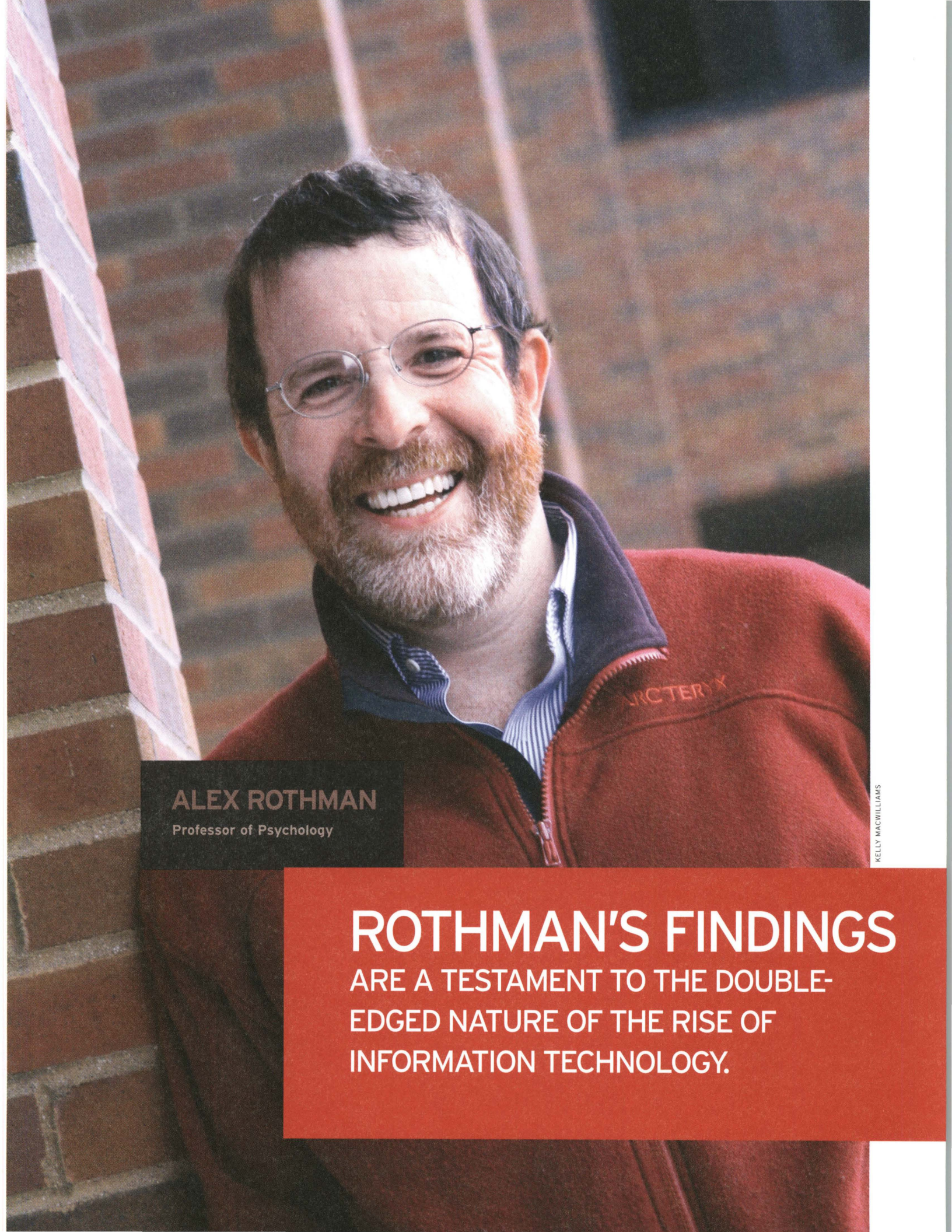
To counter this trend, Schwitzer launched a popular health news site on the Internet—healthnewsreview.org. On it, he and his colleagues point out some of the more problematic health reporting he comes across, and they discuss potential remedies to the problems plaguing the news industry in general and health reporters in particular.

The site has grown into a significant resource for journalists and news consumers alike. Schwitzer doesn’t believe that poor quality health news coverage is driven by a public with an appetite for sound bites rather than depth. He notes that publishers sometimes twist market research to support their claim that the public doesn’t want depth or nuance in their coverage. But, he counters, “There’s anecdote on top of anecdote about folks who are thirsty for in-depth analytical news.” Quenching that thirst is an important goal of his site.

We generally think of the rise of the information age as an inherently good thing: With knowledge no longer confined to the shelves of libraries and the minds of experts, we believe our democracy is strengthened and access to information, if not opportunity, ensured. But CLA researchers are a bit more cautious in their assessment of this information-drenched landscape.

“Yesterday we may have gone parched because we didn’t have access to the [health reporter] at the *Post* or the *Times*,” Schwitzer says. “But when we did have water, it was more filtered. Today we have the fire hose,” he says, “and the question is: How do we turn it down so we can get a drink?”

The answer may lie in the rise of a new kind of gatekeeper—one who does not guard knowledge but who can synthesize, scrutinize, verify, and present what’s out there in ways that benefit us all. It’s hard to imagine a world without authorities—doctors, journalists, lawyers, professors. Indeed, the more complex the world becomes, the more we may need experts to help us understand that world and translate it into language we can understand. But without the monopoly over information those experts once had, the floodgates have opened. So who *will* be the gatekeepers? ∞



ALEX ROTHMAN

Professor of Psychology

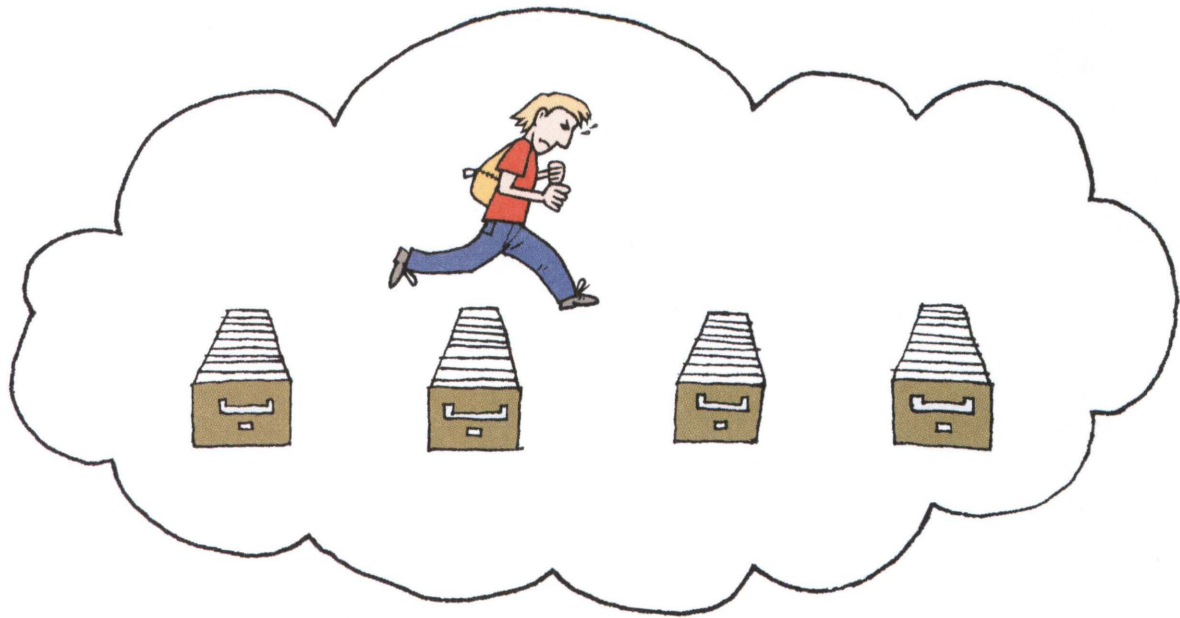
ROTHMAN'S FINDINGS

ARE A TESTAMENT TO THE DOUBLE-
EDGED NATURE OF THE RISE OF
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY.

The Internet:

FACE-OFF WITH ACADEMIA

BY LINDA SHAPIRO



SCOTT MENCHIN

THE INTERNET is not only an information superhighway, but also a haphazard ecosystem in which infinite varieties of information ricochet around like supercharged particles, provoking a revolution in how we think about the nature of knowledge, how it is acquired, who creates it, and where its authority comes from.

In such an era, how do professors deal with issues around student online research, such as plagiarism and source verification? Has the collaborative nature of sites like Wikipedia—the encyclopedia where anyone can edit or contribute to an entry—

democratized knowledge? Or has it merely facilitated a reductive Wiki-ization of learning that leads students away from libraries and toward suspect online data bases? And has access to sources outside of the professor's control encouraged profound changes in the way academia is viewed as an authoritative gatekeeper for knowledge?

We asked CLA faculty members from a broad spectrum of disciplines about how this exploding internet world has affected their teaching. Here's what they had to say.

"A blessing and a curse"

Online tools definitely are a blessing and a curse. Even though Google is one of my favorite inventions of all time, I curse it every time I grade a sub-par essay in which it's clear the student found the information in Google's top three results rather than in the fabulous databases available through the University Libraries' Web site. I've had good luck laying down my ground rules for research at the beginning of the semester, and one of those rules is: No citation of Wikipedia as a source.

It turns into a great teaching moment because we can then discuss exactly how Wikipedia works, and students can see that while it's a great invention, it might not be the best source for college-level research. It's still a useful tool for them as kind of a first-stop for basic background information, but they must be taught to view it with a critical lens.

I think the idea of democratized knowledge might be an overly utopian view of what is happening online. Many people—usually based

on their race, class and geographic location—are still not included in this information gathering and sharing in the first place. But in the sense that many people use the Internet to gather and share information and build knowledge and community from it, I think the professor has to become more of an interpreter and a guide for students.

—SHAYLA THIEL STERN, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR,
SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM AND
MASS COMMUNICATION

Online resources are just that...another resource, and so I am not freaked out that students are using them. I assume that they often know how reliable or slanted these resources are, and I will question them if necessary. But I do the same thing with “offline” resources as well. I have never tried to regulate or offer policy positions on online searches in my courses. My assignments do not really lend themselves to that, though I am sure students do what I do and seek out articles online. Whether students find term paper sites is another matter. I am always on the lookout for this possibility. One way I check on this matter is by assigning some thought essay assignments in my classes so I get a sense for a person’s writing style.

—EUGENE BORGIDA, PROFESSOR OF PSYCHOLOGY

I haven’t had any truly egregious uses of online sources in any of my classes, but I do explain to the students that almost anyone can write something and have it posted or published. Therefore, all information, whether located online or in a book or scholarly journal, needs to have its claims verified. **I also explain that “citation loops” are not uncommon: the first author/webmaster/blogger references someone else who in turn references someone else...who in turn references the first guy!”**

I dislike the terms “gatekeeper” and “guide” because they remind me of the oppressive ways in which so much knowledge is “oligarchic” in nature, and dissenting views are simply ridiculed and denied access to certain presses and forums. So the Web can be a good balance to that. I think that balance is improved with students themselves questioning accepted wisdoms. One of the challenges and pleasures of teaching is having to explain and defend one’s own truths as an active scholar, researcher, and teacher.

—MICHELLE M. WRIGHT,
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, ENGLISH

There are clear perils and pitfalls to the wiki-ization of learning. First, anyone can add information to sites such as Wikipedia. Students who use such sites for research may not be getting information and data that has been vetted by quality control mechanisms such as peer review. Given that there is no control (most of the time) over what goes on wikis, students may not get the best information, and they may actually get completely wrong information. Second, wikis make students lazy. It is much easier for them to go to a Website that appears to have all the information they need than to go to library sites that will send them to scholarly materials.

Our job as professors is to instill in the students the work ethic to learn about and complete the research process.

Our job in terms of knowledge is to guarantee that students obtain the best, most accurate information and data available. We need to teach them the difference between good and bad sources, and to help them understand from where they should be drawing information.

—TIM JOHNSON,
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, POLITICAL SCIENCE

One pitfall of online research is plagiarism. It’s so easy to cut and paste content directly from Web pages into papers. And when the best sources for papers are unavailable online, students may be unwilling to take the time to physically retrieve sources from the library. On the other hand, students have easier access to journal articles, and that reduces the cost of coursepacks and facilitates research. Also, they have easy access to primary sources produced by the government, non-governmental organizations, and corporations, as well as to valuable electronic archives.

Knowledge hasn’t really been democratized, there’s just more of it out there.

Our job as professors is to help students to develop the tools that they need to evaluate sources critically. And most professors require students to consult peer-reviewed sources in their papers—at least I do.

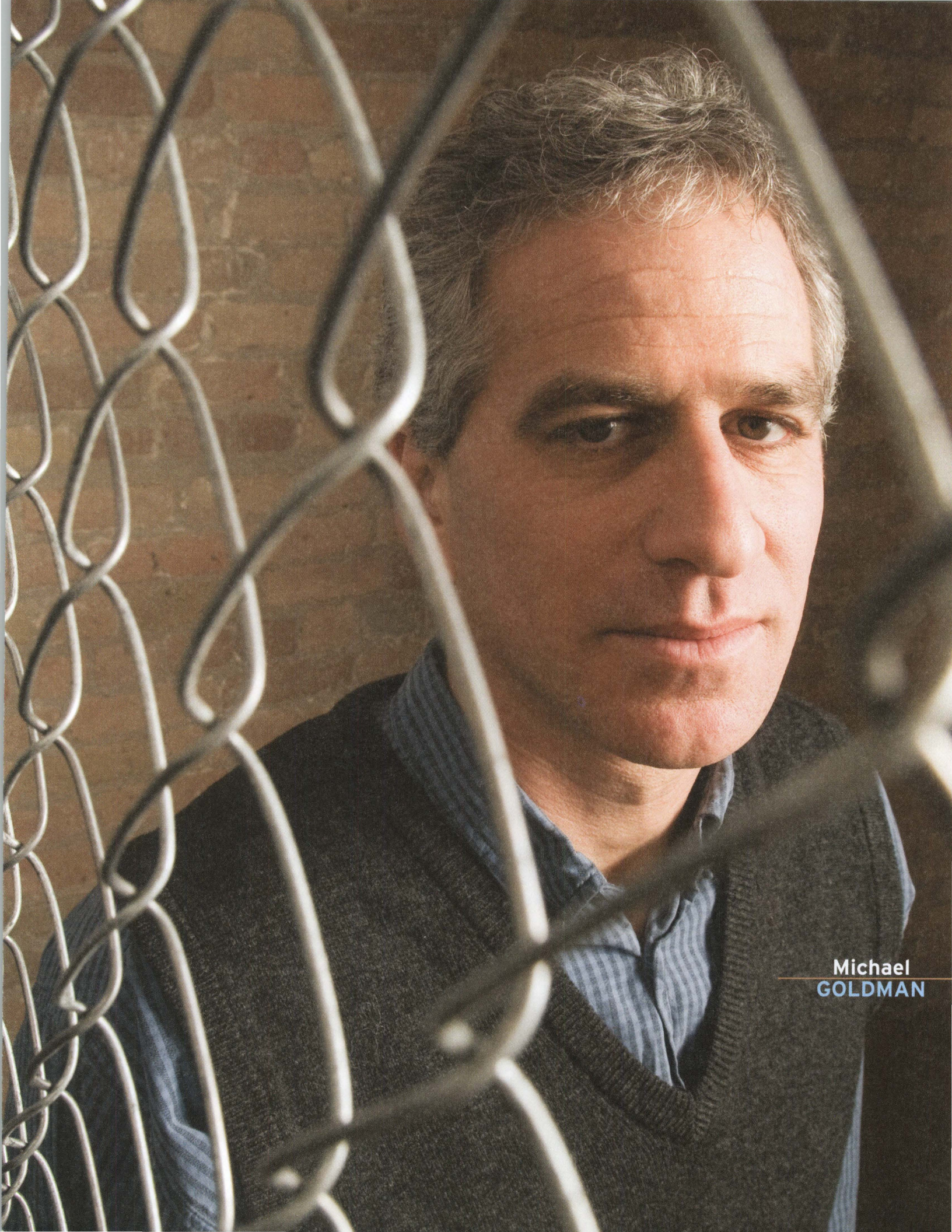
—TERI LYNN CARAWAY,
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, POLITICAL SCIENCE

The Internet is here to stay so perhaps the better question is what this medium means for the practice of research and learning. The Internet places a new importance on individual skills of critical discernment and judgment. Ironically for the technophiles, I think these challenges actually present a new argument for traditional liberal arts education. I see no more powerful way to equip oneself to deal with the chaos of the digital mediascape than through the old traditions of critical reading, thinking, and writing.

The traditional authority of the professor as a possessor of expert knowledge is certainly evaporating quickly, as is the authority of disciplinary, scholarly knowledge as a separate and superior form of knowing. Yet universities still have crucial roles to play in empowering individuals to use and comprehend the mediascape that we are inhabiting. Professors may have already lost their status as purveyors of truth and gatekeepers of access to it, but they could become instead powerful agents of empowerment in this newly decentered environment by

refocusing their energies toward critical engagement with knowledge formation itself. But this means letting go of the authority of the university as an enclave of true knowledge in a sea of mere information, and seeing knowledge more and more as a product of the interactions within the mediascape that include universities—but not as sovereign monopolies of truth.

—JB SHANK, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, HISTORY



Michael
GOLDMAN

The Borders of FREEDOM

Risks, rights, and freedom in a flat world

BY MARY SHAFER • PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOHN NOLTNER

On the street near where Michael Goldman lived in Bangalore, India, the shops are nestled next to each other like links in a chain. There's the banana market next to the hair shop, then the tailor's place, then the little store that sells televisions. On a given afternoon, you can find an entrepreneurial family in front of these shops making its own living, earning a few rupees by playing music or performing on a makeshift tightrope.

Bangalore is a city of seven million, and if you look at it from the long-distance view of World Bank reports, it is a city on the move, a resounding global-world success story. And that view would be accurate. Sort of.

"It's a half-truth," says Goldman, a professor of sociology who lived in Bangalore last year and has written about the economic inequities generated by World Bank projects. "The World Bank is lending millions to agencies to turn Bangalore into a world class city. The idea is that this fights poverty as the entrepreneurial spirit catches on."

In Goldman's view, however, one of the ripples generated by World Bank loans has been the displacement of neighborhoods like this one, where an entrepreneur is not a technocrat with start-up capital, but rather a son who has lived here since birth and is now carrying on his family's tradition in banana-market retail. When information technology consultants move in and revitalize the neighborhood to the benefit of their particular corporation, these old friends and neighbors, who are connected neither educationally nor digitally to the globe's movers and shakers, must go, well, somewhere else.

"If you could just view the world of Indian innovation, then you would see a flat world," says Goldman. "But that is an elite little sliver of the world, a sliver that has always been flat."

THE GLOBAL VILLAGE: REDUX

The idea of a "global village"—a term coined by Marshal McLuhan—has its roots in the work of Friedrich von Hayek, the 20th-century economist and political philosopher who laid the foundation for what came to be known as "neoliberalism." Hayek believed that the international market would naturally balance itself if goods, services, and resources were allowed to move freely among nations as companies sought to maximize productivity and efficiency. To that end, he believed, countries needed to remove barriers such as tariffs and restrictions on capital flow and investment.

"Globalization really took off in the '80s," says Eric Sheppard, a geography professor who has studied neoliberalism. "This was the switch point to the view that we should allow markets, ideas, and labor to move freely on an international scale. The model of globalization was open markets and open borders. It was predicted to be a rising tide that would lift all boats."

The tide rose further and more quickly as the century turned. With it came the potential for international computer collapse generated by the digital calendar rollover dubbed Y2K, and the appeal of consultants who could forestall the dreaded meltdown.

"Countries imagined a crisis," Goldman says. "We didn't know if there would be one, but we thought there might be, and Indian entrepreneurs went to Silicon Valley and said, 'You charge \$30 an hour for

“We have REAL DISCOMFORT about undocumented immigrants or actually living next door to an African/Muslim. We open the door, but only a crack.”

—ERIC SHEPPARD

IT consultants; we'll charge \$15 an hour to go in and fix the problem for Y2K and we'll keep \$13 and pay \$2 to our engineers.' It was a substantial savings to Silicon Valley. And it was then that companies began bypassing the American market to hire Indians to do the job.”

It was a free-market capitalist's dream. People could move around as freely and cheaply as did goods and information, and it helped make the corporation, rather than the nation state, the driver of commerce. But it didn't do much to eliminate economic gaps within countries.

“This idea of a totally free, boundary-less market is really a set of ideas about openness, driven by an imaginary view of how the world should be,” says Sheppard. But, he says, “that is only one perspective. This is mine: To the extent that globalization has reduced state independence, you've allowed capitalism to create inequalities.”

HAVES AND HAVE-NOTS

As the corporate tide has risen, large populations remain caught on the bottom, displaced by or unable to participate in this free world. While we now take for granted that boundaries of all kinds are dissolving—geographic, economic, cultural, informational—it seems that this view is at best superficial, according to several University scholars—including Sheppard and Goldman—who study the issue.

If anything, the barriers that separate places like the small Bangalore neighborhood from the enclaves of gleaming high-tech companies in other parts of the same city have become denser.

Statistically, says Goldman, the deep divide looks like this: Since 1990, the differential between the top fifth and the bottom fifth of the income ladder has increased exponentially. In Bangalore, for example, the differential between the wealthiest fifth and the poorest fifth of the population was 5:1 in 1990; today, it's 20:1.

“That's dramatically different,” he says. “Societies don't go through this without some kind of crisis. The irony is that the wealth is generated, but it is allowed to sit in just one sector of society. There is no public responsibility. Producing for the global economy has tremendous

costs. For every condo complex you build, you displace a neighborhood. Wealth produces wealth, but it's not an innocent process. It displaces people and has the opposite effect.”

“The actual data tell us that,” agrees Sheppard. “Since the 1970s, economic inequalities have increased, not only, say, between Africa and the West, but within and between nations as well. So there's a real sense that this is not working. Even those who have imagined a boundary-less world are willing to countenance boundaries because they see it's not working. In my view, it hasn't worked because the whole model is built on the theory that markets can work if we allow free competition. That's not a persuasive theory.”

CREATING BOUNDARIES

Ironically, it has sometimes been government itself—which is more or less in the business of creating regulations—that has in fact contributed to the problem by removing them, says Goldman.

“Technology firms thrive *because* governments put money into them, give them land, and charge few taxes,” says Goldman. “Governments actually *create* the conditions in which these firms can thrive. The mantra in India was ‘Roll back the state!’ What really happened was the state rolled out the red carpet.

“You simply can't ever have a completely unleashed economy,” he adds. “It's never existed. Here are these corporations demanding world-class facilities like a monorail and an airport and putting very little back into the city. Government has lost the authority to rein in these corporations. So the world could be flattened if civil society could say to the corporations, ‘Now you have to pay back somehow.’”

Governments may not be likely to do that, but Goldman's analysis suggests that our “boundary-less” world is a reality only for some, particularly for corporations whose vast reach extends far beyond their homeland headquarters. So it's fair to say that permeable boundaries haven't provided much freedom to those who are stuck on the lower rungs of the economic ladder. In fact, it may be that permeable boundaries don't provide much freedom at all, that in fact, we may be more likely to fear than to embrace the free flow of people and capital, at least when certain walls come down.

A photograph of a man with glasses and a mustache, wearing a dark red striped shirt and a brown jacket, standing in a doorway. To his right is a blue door with a large handle and an "EXIT" sign above it. The scene is dimly lit, with a blue tint on the door and handle.

Eric
SHEPPARD



**Barbara
WELKE**

**"The place where the
world is flat is at the
corporate level."**

—BARBARA WELKE

"There are boundaries drawn on a map, and there are others that leave no geographical imprint," says Sheppard. "There is a fundamental conflict between the idea of the global village and the threats that people see or imagine. So although people promote the idea, we have real discomfort about, say, undocumented immigrants or actually living next door to an African/Muslim. We open the door, but only a crack."

CHOOSING SAFETY

It is no longer a surprise to hear that free trade has contributed to an enormous economic divide between those who buy the goods and those who make them, or that the economic playing field is anything but level. What might be more surprising are the product safety implications of the global free market.

"The place where the world is flat is at the corporate level," says Barbara Welke, professor of history and law, who has studied commerce and consumer safety. "Corporations have the mobility and a huge investment in the notion of a flat world."

While activists have protested globalization's cost to those who make our low-cost goods, perhaps nothing has stirred consumer

consciousness quite like recent revelations that Chinese imports included toys with lead paint, chemical-laced toothpaste, and poisonous pet food. Everyone took the reports seriously: U.S. manufacturers recalled millions of products, and China itself went so far as to execute the former head of its food and drug administration for dereliction of duty.

Suddenly, the freedom to buy inexpensive imported products ran headlong into the expectation that these products would also be safe. To ensure that, we need more, not fewer controls.

"The whole notion of our wanting products that meet certain standards is a constraint on the market," says Sheppard. "It seems appropriate to set standards, but every time you do that, it's a barrier to trade."

"The contradictions are all around us," Welke adds. "People are terrified of lead paint, but the outcry is rooted in something deeper. You don't, for example, have the same kind of outcry about lead paint in buildings in poor U.S. neighborhoods as you have about toys coming from China."

This precarious balance between freedom and risk changes over time as well. Safety itself is an expectation that has developed over time, Welke says, until we have come to think of it as a right.

"Safety began being advertised as a value in products as early as the late nineteenth century," she says, "with safety lamps for burning kerosene and safety-pins and safety bikes in the early twentieth century. Later on in the century, the government passed legislation regulating safety standards for food and drugs, highway traffic, and clean air and water.

"But legislation is worthless without enforcement, and we've been on a downhill path in that regard since the Republican ascendancy of the 1980s and the message that government should get off our backs."

There's something else at work here, as well, and it has to do with Sheppard's suggestion that we sometimes erect barriers in our imaginations to replace the old ones that have been torn down.

"More stories suggest that some of these hazards are the result of failure on the part of American companies," he says. "Nevertheless, we blame the Chinese. This is a great example of our conflict between wanting freedom from boundaries and our desire to impose them. We say, 'Let's engage in unrestricted trade with China.' Then, China explodes and one reason for that is its exports to us. We see China as a coming place, and at one level, we're scared. 'Oops,' we say, 'we thought we'd still retain our prominence.'"

BORDER PATROL

It may make good sense to create borders and restrictions in a globalized world. Some of the barriers we erect, though—real or imaginary—may in fact be based less on sound judgment than on the disquieting anxiety of the times.

In the last decade, immigration has become one of the country's most contentious issues, pervading the presidential campaign and

generating strong voter anger on both sides. It's an issue that has come to the fore periodically in the country's history, in a way that underscores the confluence of factors that makes it so prominent now, says David Samuels, a political science professor who has studied these issues extensively

"In my view, this is really a debate generated by fear," he says. "People who are afraid—for their jobs, whatever—coalesce around issues aimed at immigrants. When you add fear of terrorism to the mix, you've got a situation where politicians connect terrorism to the failure to patrol borders. Anti-terrorism groups make the case that [9/11 leader] Muhammad Atta was illegal. People play off the possibility of terrorist attack. So we have to clamp down on migrants in general. We want to build walls and put guards there."

Meanwhile, says Samuels, NAFTA and economic globalization have created conditions in which the flow of both goods and people is easier. "Increased immigration is correlated with increased flow of goods, legal and illegal," he adds, "and controlling the flow of people contradicts our stated policy intentions of increasing the flow of goods and services. We do not know how to deal with that policy contradiction."

Clearly, there are legitimate arguments for regulating the flow of immigrants. Once again, though, we run headlong into the challenge of balancing freedom with risk. How much freedom are we willing to curtail to secure our safety?

"Israel is successful at keeping people out, sort of," says Samuels. "Do we want to be like Israel? And how much do we want to affect our economy? The US economy is a job magnet and would collapse if we sent everyone home. We need people on the low end of the wage scale. Whatever the solution, you and I would not have lettuce to eat without immigrants."

In the end, the contradictions between freedom and risk remain, as do the contradictions between the concept of a global village and the reality that many people are not citizens of that village. No matter what we say, we do seem to want our walls.

"The flat world myth assumes on the one hand that all flows are good, while on the other hand it fears certain flows, such as poor immigrants or China's advance, or Islam's spread," says Goldman. "So there is an implicit acknowledgement that the world really isn't flat. We need to collectively decide how to regulate, manage, and craft economies, borders, and social relations with certain overt goals in mind—like ensuring people's access to sustainable livelihoods, health care, safe products and foods, and fair rules—rather than follow one ideological frame, such as unleashed markets, that refuses to acknowledge the social inequalities and injustices that flow from it.

"Or put simply, how do we globalize justice and fairness in the workings of the economy?" ∞

TIGHTROPE WALKER

BY DANNY LACHANCE

If you want to know something about how Barack Obama differs from the black presidential hopefuls who came before him, you might begin by looking at the people who turn out to see him when he speaks.

Take, for instance, the crowd that stood in the rain last November in Austin, Texas, to hear the candidate give a stump speech. They included African immigrant men in traditional dress; white middle-aged limousine liberals in cashmere sweaters; white University of Texas fraternity brothers sporting burnt orange Longhorn caps; and affluent black teenage girls in designer shoes.

There was no Jesse Jackson-style fiery rhetoric, no inveighing against racial and economic injustice. And that, Enid Logan says, is part of Obama's appeal—his modulated tone, his message of unity. "He's appealing because he is a new-millennium black politician," the University of Minnesota sociologist explains. "He's non-confrontational. And he focuses much more on America's future—and its promise—than on the racial problems of the past."

But what does the shift from old-style to Obama-style mean for the country's thinking about race? Why has the multiracial Obama become the country's first truly viable black presidential candidate? Those are important questions, says Logan, noting that Obama's campaign presents unprecedented opportunities for us to understand the politics of race in the United States.

Part of Obama's appeal to white voters, Logan has found, is his ability to offer them a sense of absolution for racial sins of the past while assuring them that we are on the verge of a "post-racial society," a utopia where race has no effect on one's life chances.

In surveys, white Americans tend to say that racism is, for the most part, a thing of the past. "There is this fervent desire to believe that we've become a colorblind nation—or that we're very close," says Logan. And Obama's heritage—his mother is white and his father was born in Kenya—allows us to "side-step the whole issue of slavery. He's a black man we can stand behind without having references to this ugly past."

Of course, by many measures, and despite much progress, the legacy of that ugly past still lingers, with black Americans still trailing behind their white counterparts in income, education levels, and homeownership. So does support for Obama offer white people a way to deny the persistence of racial inequality?

THE UNITED STATES HAS ITS FIRST VIABLE BLACK PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE. ENID LOGAN EXPLORES HOW BARACK OBAMA IS A SIGN OF OUR RACIAL TIMES.

What these reports really reveal is a society both obsessed with race and desperate to leave it behind—collectively eager to wrestle with what it means to be black or white, yet pretending that only African Americans dwell on racial categories

Obama does acknowledge the persistence of racism, says Logan. But rather than outlining a specific agenda for combating it, he delivers a message of change, hope for an inclusive America.

The message is clearly paying off. Yet Obama is walking a tightrope, Logan says. "How does he maintain his viability as a mainstream candidate without alienating the black community by seeming to say 'the battle is over?'" she asks, noting that the vast majority of blacks, unlike whites, say that racism remains an unsolved problem in American society.

The media, meanwhile, "keep reporting that working class blacks are skeptical about whether Obama is black enough," says Logan. "But we rarely actually hear the voices of the black working class. They're generally not the people being interviewed. They're not the journalists or the pundits."

What these reports really reveal, Logan contends, is a society both obsessed with race and desperate to leave it behind—collectively eager to wrestle with what it means to be black or white, yet pretending that only African Americans dwell on racial categories.

Sugar-coating the pill

For all the old patterns she's unearthed in the speeches she's read and the coverage she's watched, Logan is, like the candidate she studies, hopeful. Obama's candidacy may appeal to a mainstream that has become Pollyannaish in its approach to racial inequality. But maybe, just maybe, a spoonful of sugar will make the medicine go down.

"There's a tremendous divide between the ways blacks and whites think about race in the United States, and it's been really hard to bridge because there's so much mistrust on either side," Logan says. "But Obama doesn't point fingers. He's telling us that the struggle for equality is part of our inheritance as Americans. And I think that his candidacy makes it feel safe for white people to talk about race."

The question, of course, is whether this new comfort level will ultimately lead to complacency rather than change. Logan, for one, is hopeful that change is on the horizon. "We're in a moment of transition and uncertainty. Obama's candidacy could help us move away from the post-civil rights movement stalemate we've become mired in and toward new ways to bridge our nation's most persistent divide." ∞

BRIDGING RACE

BY DANNY LACHANCE

WHEN IT COMES TO REPRESENTATIONS OF MULTIRACIAL PEOPLE, CATHERINE SQUIRES SAYS, THE MEDIA OFTEN DON'T HAVE IT COVERED.



MIKE BYERS, LEVY CREATIVE MANAGEMENT, NYC

Catherine Squires was power-walking through her Minneapolis neighborhood last September when she came upon three kids having a heated first-day-of-school conversation. One boy was explaining to his two black friends that he was from a mixed racial background that included, among other things, Native American and Asian American relatives. The response from his peers was fascinating to Squires, an associate professor of journalism and mass communication at the University.

“They said, ‘Just say you’re mixed—that’s what we all say. Just tell everybody at school that,’” Squires recalls. She wondered at the time whether the boy would take that advice. Would saying that he’s “mixed” make it easier for him to interact with his peers?

Intersecting backgrounds

To Squires, such conversations suggest the unique and sometimes difficult role of multiracial people in an American culture that prefers to traffic in black and white. Her recent book *Dispatches from the Color Line: The Press and Multiracial America* is a groundbreaking investigation into the way news media have reported on what it means to be a person of more than one race in the United States.

Historically, multiracial people were depicted in literature and other media as representing the “dangers” of racial mixing, says Squires. Films in the beginning of the 20th century depicted people of white and Asian parentage as deviants or villains. A film character with both black and white ancestry—“mulatto”—“had to die or be punished in some way,” Squires says.

Times have changed, of course. Tiger Woods, of Asian and African-American descent, is a hero to aspiring golfers everywhere. And Barack Obama—who has a white American mother and black African father—is a leading presidential contender.

Nonetheless, Squires argues, such examples are frequently trotted out to foreclose discussions of racial inequality. “Multiracial people are framed as a bridge away from race,” she explains. “The increase in multiracial people and interracial marriages is [seen as] proof positive that we’ve made it to a post-racial society,” where differences no longer exist or matter.

Media at the racial intersection

In the 2000 census, people were allowed to identify for the first time as multiracial. To make the coverage interesting, the media framed the story in terms of individual experience. “It’s such a big trope in journalism—‘let’s see what the person on the street thinks about this,’” Squires says. “It’s very easy to tell a heartwarming story about a multiracial family that’s overcome barriers. On an individual level, that’s great. But all the other intricacies then get lost because the personal story is so compelling.”

For Squires, the representation of multiracial people as bridges to a post-racial society is a manifestation of the media’s failure to cover the persistence of racial inequality in the United States. It’s only when racial inequality appears in stark and undeniable forms, as it did following Hurricane Katrina, that media coverage changes, say Squires. “But then ten minutes later in the news cycle, the denial of race is still strong again.”

Media discussions of race often take a point-counterpoint turn that is ultimately unhelpful to viewers. Take radio announcer Don Imus’s derogatory comments a while back about the black members of the Rutgers women’s basketball team. As the controversy heated up, the dominant media strategy was to pit two black pundits against one another. “It’s ‘let’s find a black conservative and a black liberal to duke it out about whether or not Don Imus is a racist. We need to get a ‘pro’ and a ‘con’ on this.’”

“The increase in multiracial people and interracial marriages is [seen as] proof positive that we’ve made it to a post-racial society.” —CATHERINE SQUIRES

In the end, the coverage rarely goes beyond facile debates about whether or not this or that public figure is racist. “If that’s the question,” Squires argues, “you can’t ask other important questions”—about misogyny directed against black women, for example.

“The conventional wisdom is ‘if you talk about race, you’re going to lose,’” Squires says. But the ubiquity of conversations like the one she heard on her September walk suggests to Squires a public desire for meaningful discussions of race. She’s heartened by the hunger she sees in her students for racial conversations that break out of old patterns that are, well, black and white.

“They don’t want to talk about race in ways that rehash old frameworks,” she says. “They want to speak about their experiences; they want to understand them in larger frameworks.”

Squires was attracted to Minnesota in part by the size and proximity of the Twin Cities television market and her potential to influence coverage of hot-button issues such as race. “I hope that as I get to know more people in the industry, I’ll be able to leverage the U’s resources and contacts to have frank conversations about racial coverage with people who work in the industry.”

Squires has her work cut out for her. As images of New Orleans painfully reminded us, race is still caught up in large-scale power dynamics that go beyond individual acts of racism. If we are serious about addressing the inequalities that still haunt American society, Squires says, we need journalists dedicated to uncovering, rather than masking, those large-scale dynamics.

“If journalists aren’t doing a good job of reporting on racial issues, then we all suffer.” ∞

Odyssey

WITH A COMMITMENT TO MODERN GREEK STUDIES, NICHOLAS KOLAS HONORS HIS HERITAGE—AND AN OLD FRIEND

BY MARY SHAFER

When Theo Stavrou was a new University faculty member in 1961, teaching his first class in the history of the modern Middle East, he couldn't help but notice the student in the second row. "He kept smiling during the whole class," Stavrou recalls.

After class, the young man introduced himself as Nicholas Kolas. Like the professor, Kolas had been born and raised in Greece, and the two struck up a conversation. Nearly five decades later, their conversations—now ensconced in a firm and loyal friendship—continue.

Both men went on to sterling careers. Stavrou remains on the University faculty as a renowned professor of modern Greek and Russian history. Kolas graduated with a degree in political science in 1962, then became a successful business entrepreneur in southern Minnesota. Among the bedrocks of their friendship has been an abiding love for and commitment to the study of modern Greece. Now,

It was 1955 when Kolas left Greece, arriving in New York where an immigration agent unwittingly shortened the family name, Klokithas, to "Kolos," which could be translated roughly—and generously—as "windbag." He eventually changed it to Kolas and went on to live the quintessential American success story. After living with a sister in Austin, Minnesota, where he went to high school to learn English and mopped floors to earn his way, he became the first member of his family to graduate from college.

Combining his Greek roots with entrepreneurial savvy, Kolas graduated from his first job as a supermarket trainee—"the only thing I could get"—to eventually own a chain of stores in Austin and Rochester. He recalls how he came to name the liquor store that was part of the chain. It was 1969, and the news was all about the first manned mission to the moon when the name came to him. "Apollo!" he laughs, slapping his forehead as one imagines he might have done at the time. "That's it! Named for an American moon landing AND a Greek god!"

"Mr. Kolas is a supreme example of a young man who worked extremely hard, and beat almost anything that came his way to improve himself professionally and socially," Stavrou says of his friend. "I admire his loyalty, and his willingness to always respond when there is a need, whether it's in education or working with other civic associations.

"He is very much interested in seeing that these traditions to which I have dedicated all my academic life—mainly the teaching of Greek language and modern Greek literature and culture—continue.

We have trained some outstanding students who are now teaching in leading American colleges and

universities; our library in the field is arguably one of the best in the country. The fellowship—part of a three-phase initiative to endow modern Greek studies at the University—will help continue this tradition."

For both of these men, the story is about overcoming the obstacles on the journey, so it is hardly a surprise that each says he has been inspired by the poem "Ithaca," by the Greek poet Constantine Cavafis.

"Always keep Ithaca on your mind.
To arrive there is your ultimate goal.
But do not hurry the voyage at all.
It is better to let it last for many years;
and to anchor at the island when you are old,
rich with all you have gained on the way" ∞

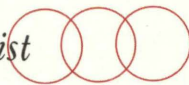


MAXWELL KUBALA

they hope to see that commitment embodied in a fellowship that Kolas helped launch last fall. Its aim will be to attract top-notch graduate students in modern Greek studies—and it will be named for Theo Stavrou.

For Kolas, the fellowship continues a lifetime of investment in keeping his culture alive. Listen to him talk about his native Greece and you can practically feel the Mediterranean sun spilling onto his stories. There he is, the youngest of 12 children growing up on the family farm near the ancient port city of Patras. He's the one his father teasingly calls "Benjamin," after the twelfth son of the biblical Jacob.

And there is his mother, determined to keep the farm running and the family together after her husband is killed by a bull when Nicholas is only 3. She is determined, too, that her youngest will be educated, even though she herself is unschooled—at a time when only 10 percent of Greek children finish high school at all. "It was 'education, education, education,'" Kolas says of her fondly.



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EVERETT AVOUBZADEH

Making Change

I love traveling and learning about new places and cultures. But wherever I am, I'm always proud to say that I live in Minnesota and work for the U of M. One thing that I take special pride in is Minnesota's wonderful twin traditions of caring and philanthropy.

As a society, we acknowledge the need for private donors: We reward them with tax benefits and we put

their names on plaques, walls, and buildings. Certainly such recognition is important. The most important incentive for most donors, however, is their desire to change something in the world.

This year, our donors have indeed made change, and for that we are exceedingly grateful. We may not have the space here to list each and every donor, but please know that every gift matters, from the most modest to the most lavish.

Change often comes in small packages, one gift at a time, but the collective result of your giving is transformation—in our college, and in students' lives.

This academic year, CLA awarded \$3.9 million in privately funded scholarships and fellowships. That's nearly 1,000 individual awards: 1,000 dreams realized, 1,000 doors of opportunity opened. But the real story is in the students' lives and in their expressions of gratitude:

"This gift inspires me to work hard and excel; and I pledge that I will one day pass that inspiration along to others."

"I am incredibly grateful to have been chosen for this generous scholarship and to have been given the most important gift of all: an education."

"I cannot imagine being at any other school except for the U, and my scholarship was a big part of my decision to come here. Nothing seems impossible at the U, because everyone tells me that I can achieve my dreams if I just try. I hope my work and dedication will prove just how thankful I am to be receiving this scholarship."

Such testimonials cut to the heart of why people give. They are uplifting and heartwarming. But with more than 16,000 students in the college, the numbers fall far short of what we need. For every scholarship we award, many more deserving students are waiting in the wings. Perhaps most telling of all is this note from a very talented student who got away:

"I have wanted to attend the U since I was a little girl. Unfortunately, although I was offered scholarships to go elsewhere, [I received] not one ... from the University of Minnesota. You probably have no idea how disappointed I was that I couldn't go to the University of Minnesota, my dream school, because I couldn't afford it."

You can help give stories like this a happy ending. I hope that you will consider making a scholarship gift—not just to make CLA "more competitive," but also to turn students' dreams into reality. Please remember that gifts to a scholarship or fellowship fund that reaches the \$25,000 endowment level may qualify for a match from the University, doubling the impact of your gift and doubling the joy of giving.

If you would like to talk about a scholarship or fellowship gift, please contact the CLA Office of External Relations at 612-625-5031.

MARY HICKS, DIRECTOR, CLA EXTERNAL RELATIONS
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Search Where does CLA go from here?



Search Results To the head of the class.



It's been quite a decade for CLA. The faculty—half of whom have joined us in these ten years—are younger, more international, and stronger than ever before. Our students are more qualified and more diverse, their experience here more innovative and personal. Applications have skyrocketed. So now what? No modest aims here: We are moving this college into the top tier among its peers to become a model for the future of liberal arts education. We're doing that with some pretty bold initiatives in areas like religious studies, Mediterranean studies, linguistics, social and behavioral sciences, and innovative collaborations across disciplines, colleges, and beyond the U. See for yourself: Find CLA researchers and their work through the U's Driven to Discover Web site at discover.umn.edu.

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