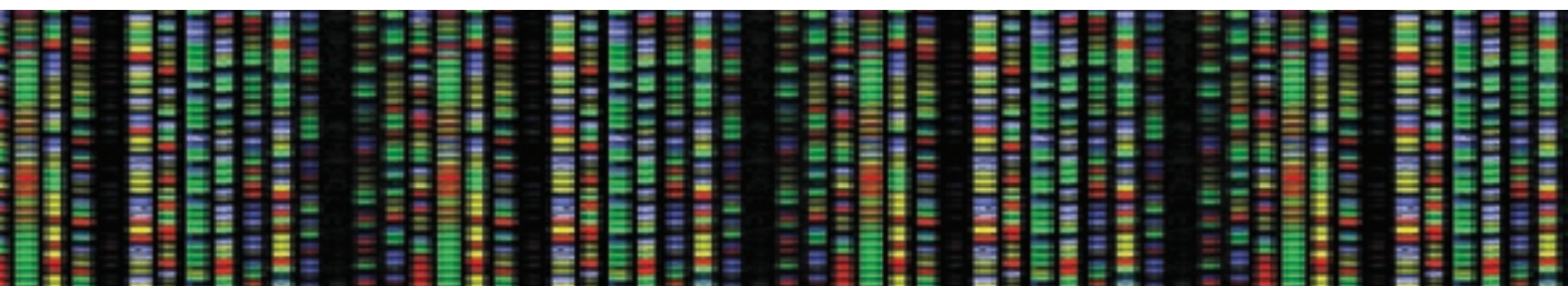


**NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY**  
**WEINBERG COLLEGE**  
**OF ARTS AND SCIENCES**

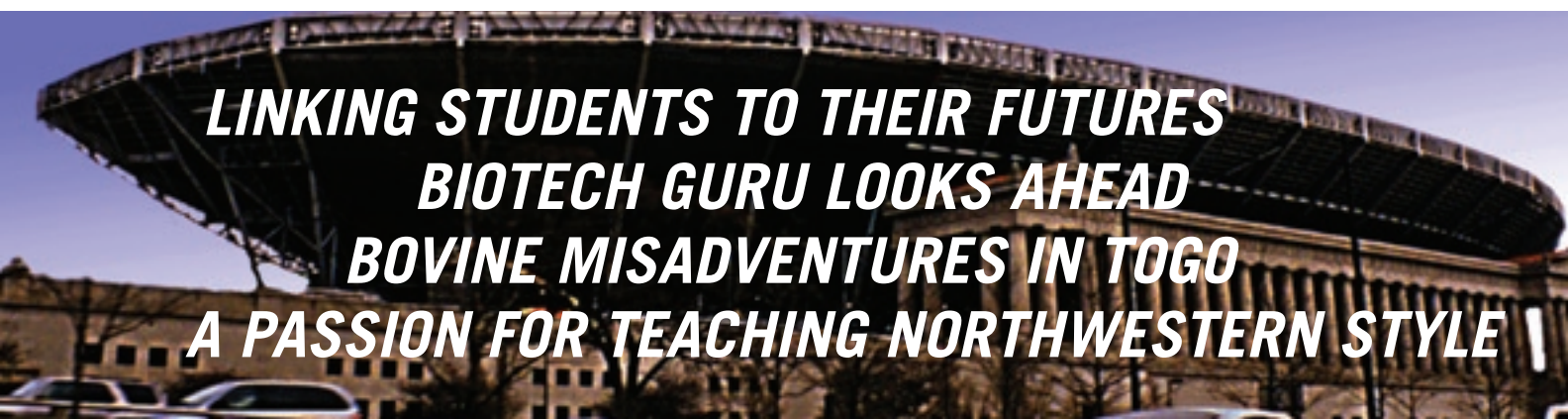
SPRING 2003  
VOLUME 4, NUMBER 1

**CROSS**

**CURRENTS**



**LINKING STUDENTS TO THEIR FUTURES**  
**BIOTECH GURU LOOKS AHEAD**  
**BOVINE MISADVENTURES IN TOGO**  
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## NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY WEINBERG COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

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CONVERSATION BETWEEN  
NICOLA BEISEL AND  
EDWARD GIBSON;  
RENOVATED SOLDIER FIELD.  
CROSSCURRENTS IS  
PUBLISHED TWICE  
A YEAR FOR ALUMNI,  
PARENTS, AND  
FRIENDS OF THE  
JOHN A. AND MARJORIE  
WEINBERG COLLEGE  
OF ARTS  
AND SCIENCES,  
NORTHWESTERN  
UNIVERSITY.

WE'D LIKE TO HEAR  
FROM YOU.  
SEND LETTERS  
AND STORY IDEAS TO  
NANCY DENEEN,  
CROSSCURRENTS,  
WEINBERG COLLEGE,  
AT ADDRESS ON BACK  
COVER, BY FAX TO  
(847) 491-4289,  
OR BY E-MAIL TO  
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## FROM THE DEAN



**A**lumni sometimes ask me about the relevance of a liberal arts curriculum for young people today. Many students and their parents keep one eye on job opportunities and the competition to get into a top professional school. Almost everyone is attuned to the rapid, sometimes unpredictable pace of change in the world. Threats and risks dominate the headlines: terrorism, environmental damage, emerging viruses or any number of other “modern” ills. At the same time, technology alters the potential to ameliorate significant problems. Computer literacy, a novelty in the workplace 25 years ago, is now an essential. With the competitive challenges, risks, and technologies our students must deal with, should we not be rethinking our curriculum to foster their success after graduating from Weinberg College?

The answer is an emphatic “yes,” with an equally emphatic affirmation of why a liberal arts approach to learning is best. “Facts” that we teach today have the habit of changing as we gain new understandings, so mastery of information alone can paradoxically leave students poorly prepared for the future. In contrast, instruction that teaches students to evaluate data critically, work collaboratively, apply creativity to problems, and communicate clearly and effectively will continue to resonate as today’s “facts” are superseded by the new.

Students who plan to go on to medical, law, business or graduate school, or to seek immediate employment, should first stretch their minds and talents, combining mastery of their major with wide-ranging intellectual exploration. Our curriculum is set up to entice them to fall in love with new areas of inquiry and scholarship—to discover philosophy and art and astronomy and language and other cultures—and in the process to learn new modes of thought and expression.

In a world where “globalism” marks the fast-arriving future, our students need a greatly increased international awareness and an empathetic ability to imagine how other people see our common problems and possibilities. We offer many courses with an international focus, from the role of non-governmental organizations in achieving peace to cross-cultural management. The liberal arts approach also asks our students to develop real proficiency in a foreign language in order to gain first-hand access to the history, literature, and culture of other societies. This year, the faculty

is looking to develop new ways to integrate the study of languages across the curriculum and to increase the number of languages we offer.

In this 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary year of the first web-browser, our incoming freshmen have been online since they were eight. Faculty members are rising to the challenge of this new reality by deep rethinking of curricular possibilities. Our Art Theory and Practice department has devised a course in digital art: students realize their artistic visions through technological media. Students in Comparative Literature courses examine the Internet as they would the invention of the printing press, as a revolution in technology, communication, and culture. At the same time, on the Internet we are all only a click away from junk; how to interrogate sources critically is a traditional skill that our faculty must teach our students in a new research environment.

As Weinberg contributes to scientific and technological advancement, our undergraduates, often supported by research grants, are working in the labs of our world-class scientists. On a broader scale, Weinberg wants all of its graduates to be sufficiently science-literate to comprehend the breakthroughs that promise to change our understanding of ourselves and our environment. We ask ourselves whether our system of distribution requirements helps us achieve this goal.

Weinberg College is simultaneously an educational leader and a keeper of the tradition of arts and sciences. We have begun cross-examining our core requirements for their relevance and rigor. How do we keep freshman seminars, distribution requirements, and the foreign language requirement fresh and effective? As we think about these issues, we would like to hear your time-tested reflections about your own experiences. What impact did these components of the curriculum have on your career choices, intellectual pursuits, or life as a citizen after Northwestern? You may write to me at the Weinberg College Dean’s Office or reach me by email at [dean@wcas.northwestern.edu](mailto:dean@wcas.northwestern.edu). I look forward to hearing from you.

Daniel Linzer



## LETTERS

### UNDERGRADS' RESEARCH CONTRIBUTES TO BOOK

In the wake of the story about the Ellmanns and James Joyce in the fall issue, I thought that your readers would be pleased to hear about a book forthcoming from Northwestern University Press, an edition of



critical writings by Eugene Jolas. Born in New Jersey and raised in Alsace-Lorraine, Jolas was a multilingual poet, journalist, and critic, who edited and serialized *Finnegans Wake* over its 17-year gestation as *Work in Progress*. Jolas, along with his wife, Maria Jolas, and the poet Elliot Paul, founded the influential avant-garde journal, *transition*, which appeared in Paris between the wars. The

journal remains an inexhaustible resource for students and scholars of Modernism. Jolas's own critical essays—written in German, French, and English—give a journalistic account of the artistic movements of late Modernism: from Futurism and Dada to Surrealism and Joyce's final work. Jolas was himself the author of multilingual, experimental poetry, as well as an anecdotal column entitled "Rambles through Literary Paris," written for the European edition of the *Chicago Tribune*.

The 1998 publication of Jolas's autobiography, *Man from Babel*, inspired Professor Rainer Rumold [of the Department of German] and graduate student Ela Kotkowska to lead the undergraduate research group who helped produce this new edition.

The undergraduate researchers

were responsible for translating articles from French, writing introductions and annotations, and establishing a chronology. The comparative literary studies students involved were Ayse Draz '02, Laura Storz '03 and myself. I found the experience of undergraduate research to be an exciting one and hope that it will become a mainstay of the College's curricula in the humanities.

— Zakir Paul '02

LEFT: JAMES JOYCE IMAGE BY MYRON NUTTING, 1922. COURTESY OF NORTHWESTERN'S CHARLES DEERING MCCORMICK LIBRARY OF SPECIAL COLLECTIONS.

### CAPITAL QUESTION

I am writing in reference to the map on page 11 of the spring 2002 issue of *Crosscurrents* that shows Middle Eastern countries with starred cities, presumably indicating the nations' capitals. For Israel, Tel Aviv is starred. This is particularly puzzling, since Israel declared Jerusalem its capital in 1950. Jerusalem is where the Knesset (parliament), the prime minister's residence, and all departments of government are located. The U.S. State Department acknowledges this fact (see [http://](http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/3581.htm)

[www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/3581.htm](http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/3581.htm), which lists Jerusalem as the capital and Tel Aviv as another city). Liz Dougherty of Map Resources, the source of the map, writes: "We are currently in the process of updating all of our international maps to indicate Jerusalem as the capital of Israel. Our new products....will have Jerusalem as the capital." I ask my alma mater whose motto is "Whatsoever things are true" to acknowledge and correct the error.

— Neal Hulkower '70, McCormick '73, '77

*Editor's note: We received the following statement from Robert Dahl, president of Map Resources Inc:*

It was incorrect of [Map Resources] to show Tel Aviv as the capital of Israel. The U.S. State Department lists Jerusalem as the capital, with a note indicating that "Israel proclaimed Jerusalem as its capital in 1950. The United States, like nearly all other countries, maintains its

# ZAKIR PAUL '02 WRITES THAT AN UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH GROUP HELPED PRODUCE A NEW EDITION OF CRITICAL WRITINGS BY EUGENE JOLAS.

## CALLING THE DARTMOUTH HOUSE GANG

What fun to flip through the fall issue and see the photo of the Dartmouth House gang in the article on Cathy Crowley! I lived in that house/dorm for parts of three



CATHY CROWLEY

years. (Spring quarter of my senior year I moved into “Fisherfolk,” the residential Christian community in the blue house next to Allison Hall.) In fact, I was the first RA [resident assistant] for the house. It opened at the last minute in fall 1974 during a big housing shortage. It had been faculty housing previously, I believe, and they converted it at the last minute for students. There

were 14 of us the first year, all transfer students. It was an interesting space, and an interesting group of girls. During the next two years we got a few freshmen as spaces opened up, but it was still mostly transfers.

As best I can recollect, the photo is from my second year in the house, my junior year, 1975–76. I remember some of the girls’ names, but not all of them. I was wondering if perhaps any of the

others have contacted you. (I’m the one sitting on the bottom step on the right, in pants). I’d love to get their names, and order a copy of the photo if possible. Thanks!

— Carol Appleby,  
Communication ’78

*Editor’s note: If other readers also recognized some of the faces in the Dartmouth House photo, please let Crosscurrents know.*

embassy in Tel Aviv.”

The U.S. State Department indicated some time ago that it would officially recognize Jerusalem as the capital, but it has not done so yet. When it does we will change our maps to show Jerusalem as the capital. In the meantime, we will show both cities as major cities, but will not star either city as the capital. We believe that this is consistent with accepted cartographic conventions. We apologize for any confusion our representation of Tel Aviv as the capital of Israel may have caused.



PHOTO COURTESY OF NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES





## **CAMPAIGN NORTHWESTERN**

### **BLUEPRINTS BECOME CLASSROOMS AND LABORATORIES**

This, the final year of Campaign Northwestern, has been an exciting time of growth for the University and for Weinberg College, according to Dean Daniel Linzer: “Funds from the Campaign are changing the face of Northwestern and, in the process, are enriching the learning experiences of thousands of undergraduates. The success of the Campaign, especially in the difficult economy of the past two years, shows that Northwestern ranks high on the list of philanthropic priorities for alumni.” Linzer credits Northwestern president Henry S. Bienen with establishing far-reaching goals of excellence for the University and spearheading, with a remarkable group of alumni, faculty, and friends, a fund-raising drive successful enough to bring these goals to fruition.

“No one can remember a time in which the College had three new buildings under construction at once,” adds Marvin Lofquist, Weinberg’s associate dean overseeing the construction. The chemistry-based Center for Nanofabrication and Molecular Self-Assembly opened in September. The Mary Jane McMillen Crowe addition to Kresge Hall, adding four new floors for the humanities under one extended roof, will open in June, and the Arthur and Gladys Pancoe-Evanston Northwestern Healthcare Life Sciences Pavilion will debut in July.

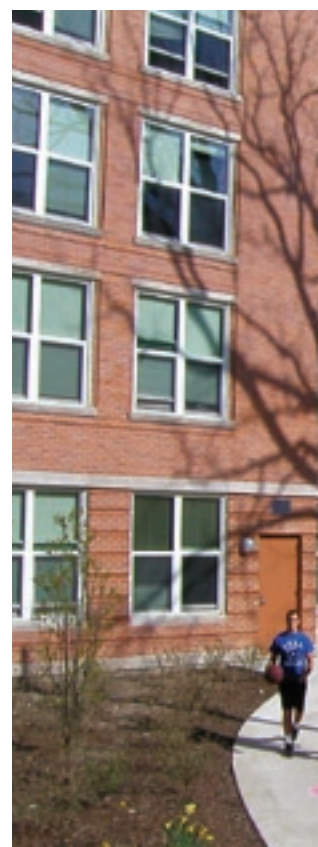
Behind what the campus observer sees—the cranes, bulldozers, bricks and mortar—are expanded living and learning opportunities. Some buildings are completed, some in progress. Students may now enjoy apartment-style suites in two new residence halls, named for James S. Kemper and Benjamin W. Slivka. In “Hotel Kemper,” they might enjoy a beautiful view of Lake Michigan. In Slivka, they may head to the “discovery room” to complete a science or technology project or to the cyber café before heading off to class.

The addition of Slivka has made possible the elimination of the lottery system for student housing so that any Northwestern student who wishes can live on campus.

That class may be a seminar taught by one of many outstanding new faculty members whom the College has hired in clusters, to strengthen key departments. Students may indulge their curiosity in extensive new course offerings in African American or Asian American studies, in interdisciplinary programs like comparative literature or international relations, or in the life sciences. In one of the increasing number of “smart classrooms,” they may integrate written and visual materials for a class presentation by plugging into a classroom-based laptop connected to a video screen.

These enhancements—all contributing to attracting top faculty and students—are made possible by funds from Campaign Northwestern, which reached its goal of \$1.4 billion in December. As of late March, the total in cash received and pledges was \$1,451,770,000. More than 97,000 donors have contributed to the Campaign, which concludes at the end of August. But Dean Linzer and others emphasize that alumni generosity remains critically important in order to fully realize Campaign objectives and to continue the high standards the University has set for itself and by which it will be judged.

Gifts of any size, in the aggregate, make a significant difference in the quality of education students receive, according to Matthew TerMolen, the outgoing head of Weinberg development who now serves as associate vice president of development for the University.







## FRIENDS REMEMBER STEVEN GLICK

- Gifts of \$25, \$50, and \$100 help pay for students to travel downtown for internships with Chicago-area nonprofit agencies. They support Weinberg's freshman seminars and fund student field trips in sociology and geological sciences. When combined, these gifts make possible larger opportunities such as guest lectures, research grants, and tickets to special performances.

- Gifts of \$500, \$1,000, and \$5,000 help purchase new computers and software, create teaching awards, develop new courses, support student travel to archives for special research projects, and fund undergraduate prizes.

*FROM TOP LEFT: KRESGE HALL'S CROWE ADDITION FACING SOUTH; (LEFT) NANO AND PANCOR-ENH; HARRIS 107 (THE ACCENTURE FORUM), ONE OF THE RENOVATED CLASSROOMS; BELOW: SLIVKA RESIDENCE HALL.*



When his Northwestern friends heard that Steven Glick had died in the September 11 attacks on the World Trade Center, they were determined to create something positive and lasting in his memory. So through an e-mail chain, his fraternity brothers from Phi Gamma Delta and other friends banded together and raised \$50,000 in a matter of months. During reunion weekend last October, more than 40 of the group gathered in Andersen Hall in a seminar room that will be dedicated to Glick's memory.



STEVEN GLICK

Photo: © Katharine Andriotis

"To do something positive for a friend and his family—that's what this whole effort was about," said Ken Glickstein (McC'86, GMcC and KSM'92) in a telephone interview from his Denver home. He and Justin Skala '82 head the fundraising drive. "Our success speaks to the extent to which Steve had a positive impact on people's lives."

Glick, who graduated in 1982, was a senior when Glickstein was a freshman. "Steve was both a mentor and a role model," said Glickstein. Among other influences, Glick convinced the freshman to join a fraternity, a move that, Glickstein says, made his time at Northwestern especially rewarding. Glick was very outgoing and easy to talk to, according to his friend. "He made an effort to look out for people and was very perceptive about what was going on with them."

Fundraising efforts are ongoing. At the upcoming 2003 reunion weekend, Glickstein and Skala plan a formal dedication of the seminar room. For information about the drive to honor Glick or about the dedication ceremony next fall, contact the Weinberg College Development Office at 847-467-5401.

# AWARD-WINNING BOOKS BY THE



**BOOK PRIZE, 2003**  
Historians Of British Art

*The Other Hogarth: Aesthetics of Difference*, co-edited by Bernadette Fort and Angela Rosenthal, Princeton University Press, 2001

William Hogarth's visual art—portraits, so-called conversation pieces, political satires, and narrative prints of contemporary life, high and low—has carried his fame far beyond the world of 18th-century England. The tercentenary of his birth six years ago was commemorated world-wide.

At that time, professor of French Bernadette Fort and colleague Angela Rosenthal (now assistant professor at Dartmouth College) decided to celebrate the remarkable collection of prints by Hogarth in the Charles Deering McCormick Library of Special Collections at Northwestern. They organized an exhibition and a symposium at the Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art entitled *Hogarth and His Times Revisited*. The exhibition survives as a popular website and teaching tool at <http://www.library.nwu.edu/spec/hogarth/>.

Fort and Rosenthal then asked scholars from England, France, Germany, and the United States to contribute original essays to a volume that focused on issues at the social margins in Hogarth's *oeuvre*. The result is the richly illustrated volume *The Other Hogarth: Aesthetics of Difference*. The Book Prize Committee of the Historians of British Art called the book the "best multi-authored/edited volume treating a topic on British visual culture from any period."



**BEST BOOK OF POETRY AWARD FOR 2002**  
The Texas Institute of Letters

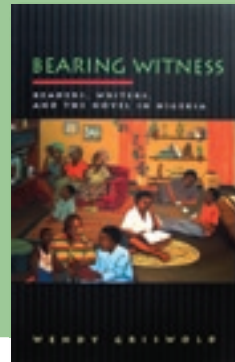
*It's Time*, by Reginald Gibbons, Louisiana State University Press, 2002

The Texas Institute of Letters presents awards to writers who have lived in Texas or write about Texas. Professor of English Reginald Gibbons, a Houston-born poet, novelist, and translator, won the institute's award for best novel in 1995 for *Sweetbitter* and for best book of poetry in 2002 for *It's Time*.

The award citation said, "Gibbons' poems in *It's Time* go below the surface of mechanical time to explore the synchronous imagination, which allows him to be present in the Greece of Homer's day and keep his eyes open in modern day America...His poems are witty excursions into the past, through the loophole of what we mean by now and then."

The poem "Mortal Men" resembles an ancient Greek ode in form, but its setting is modern Greece. The poem concludes:

On some demolished but still gleaming  
Acropolis of thought,  
Language is our Parthenon:  
Always in ruins—but unlike stone,  
Always rebuilding itself already.  
And not far from it  
In spring light,  
Delicate red  
Poppies bloom at the unnamed foot  
Of each gnarled growing gray-green column  
And everywhere a poem can't reach.



**SOCIOLOGY OF CULTURE BEST BOOK, 2002**  
American Sociological Association

*Bearing Witness: Readers, Writers, and the Novel in Nigeria*, by Wendy Griswold, Princeton University Press, 2000

Sociology professor Wendy Griswold, also a member of the English department, wanted the cover of her book to illustrate what it's like to be a reader in Nigeria. Though the scene is of a comfortable living room, there are many relatives gathered—not a quiet life for the one who holds the book.

Griswold chose Nigeria for her sociological study of the novel because she wanted to research and write about a place where the novel as a form was imported and where the new form was very successful. She wanted "a different story," something other than the novel as an 18th-century Western European phenomenon. She visited Nigeria four times, and read 473 novels, in order to complete *Bearing Witness*.

While in Nigeria, she interviewed many readers and writers, among them Ken Saro-Wiwa, a novelist, newspaper columnist, and public intellectual. In 1995, for his activities on behalf of human rights, Saro-Wiwa was executed by Nigeria's military dictatorship. It was a great loss, said Griswold—for Saro-Wiwa's family and friends, his country, and the literary world.



# WEINBERG FACULTY

BY BARBARA GHOSHAL



**CO-WINNER OF THE LEEDS AWARD  
FOR URBAN, NATIONAL, AND  
TRANSNATIONAL ANTHROPOLOGY**  
American Anthropology Association

*Salaula: The World of Secondhand Clothing in Zambia*, by Karen Tranberg Hansen, The University of Chicago Press, 2000

Karen Hansen, professor of anthropology, studies the intersection of the global economy and local societies. "I noticed in Zambia in the late 1980's that there was a huge increase in the amount of salaula, secondhand clothing, for sale in the markets. I decided to trace its path and it took me across the world and throughout Zambian society."

*Salaula*, illustrated by many of the author's own photographs, deals with anthropology, Africa, the clothing trade, and the human preoccupation with self-presentation.

The "story of clothes" that Hansen tells typically begins with donations of used clothing from Americans and Europeans. Some of this clothing goes to textile recyclers and graders and then to for-profit sellers of used clothing to markets in third world countries. In Zambia, many small tailors, working in symbiosis with the worn-clothing trade, help to fashion "new" garments and styles out of old.

She discusses the "dressed body," how one presents oneself in Zambia using *salaula*, given one's age, gender, and position. She notes that the final consumers of *salaula* are discriminating: they prefer suits made in Europe, for example, and say American denim clothing is too worn.



**AWARD FOR BEST FIRST BOOK IN  
POLITICAL THEORY/PHILOSOPHY,  
2001**

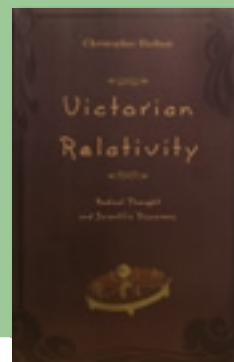
American Political Science Association

*Plato's Democratic Entanglements: Athenian Politics and the Practice of Philosophy*, by S. Sara Monoson, Princeton University Press, 2001

"*Plato's Democratic Entanglements* challenges the longstanding and widely held view that Plato is a virulent opponent of all things democratic," says Sara Monoson, professor of political science. "I argue that we should attend more closely to Plato's suggestion that democracy is horrifying and exciting, and I seek to explain why he found it morally and politically intriguing."

Monoson focuses on Plato's engagement with democracy as he knew it: both a cluster of cultural practices that reached into private and public life and a set of governing institutions. She proposes that while Plato charts the tensions between the claims of democratic legitimacy and philosophical truth, he also exhibits a striking attraction to four practices central to Athenian democratic politics: intense anti-tyranny, frank speaking, public funeral oratory, and theater-going.

"By juxtaposing detailed examination of these aspects of Athenian democracy with close analysis of the figurative language, dramatic structure and arguments of the dialogues," says Monoson, "I show that Plato systematically links these ideals and activities to philosophic labor." Monoson's book, according to the American Political Science Association, "adds significant new dimensions and insights to a venerable scholarly debate."



**BRITISH COUNCIL PRIZE  
RUNNER-UP, 2002**

North American Conference  
on British Studies

*Victorian Relativity: Radical Thought and Scientific Discovery*, by Christopher Herbert, University of Chicago Press, 2001

Einstein's theory of relativity often has been characterized as a radical break with previous scientific thinking. Professor of English Chris Herbert argues that by the early twentieth century when the principle of relativity transformed physics, relativity had already served as a central theme of avant-garde thinking for fifty years or so—and had long been associated with radical politics. "In pursuing this argument," he says, "I challenge the oft-repeated dictum that relativity in physics, in the words of one distinguished authority, 'has, of course, absolutely nothing whatsoever to do with ethical relativism.'"

The North American Conference on British Studies notes that Herbert's book "challenges the assumption that scientific discourse in any period is bound to express and reinforce dominant ideologies and established structures. As such, the study makes an important contribution to British intellectual, cultural, and political history."

**BARBARA GHOSHAL, A SECRETARY IN  
THE WEINBERG COLLEGE DEAN'S OFFICE,  
IS WORKING ON A MASTER'S DEGREE IN  
LITERATURE THROUGH NORTHWESTERN'S  
SCHOOL OF CONTINUING STUDIES.**

FROM LEFT: JENNIFER VANOVERBEKE; KAREN RUSSELL; NATHAN GOUWENS; CRAIG BINA, ASSOCIATE DEAN FOR UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES; LAUREN MLSNA; DEAN DAN LINZER; LAURIE JAECKEL; KUNAL KARMALI; NEIL SCHOENBLUM; AND PAUL ISAAC. (NOT PICTURED: JOSEPH KONOPKA)



## WEINBERG SCHOLARS RECALL THEIR FAVORITE THINGS

What will you take with you as you leave Northwestern?" We posed that question to nine Weinberg seniors after the ceremony last fall in which Dean Daniel Linzer presented them with Marcy, James, and Bonbright awards for outstanding work in their junior year. "The friendships I've made, the professors I've had, the activities I've participated in all make me feel like I won the college lottery, and Northwestern was the prize," says Karen Russell, who will pursue a master of fine arts degree and a writing career after graduation.



KAREN RUSSELL

Russell, who hails from Miami, says even the winter's "teeth-chattering cold" has not dissuaded her from believing that Northwestern was the best place to spend her college years. She received the Bonbright award—for the best junior-year record in literary, language, and art studies—along with classmates Laurie Jaeckel, an American studies major, and Neil Schoenblum, who majored in classics. Schoenblum, who will attend law school in the fall, says his Weinberg experience left him with "a deep appreciation of great literature." Jaeckel says she learned about the world's complexity: "I see issues from

different perspectives and question my own opinions," a skill she calls especially important as she looks to a career in public policy making after law school and graduate school.



LAURIE JAECKEL

Joseph Konopka has equally clear career goals. After serving in Americorps, he hopes for a yearlong fellowship in England, then medical school and a master's degree in business administration. He was honored to receive the Oliver Marcy award. "My determination has always come from within. As such, my path can scarcely qualify as 'work,' though it was far from easy." Konopka credits Northwestern and the particular combination of friends, professors, and classes with his personal and academic growth. "I could not ask for more from a college experience," he says.

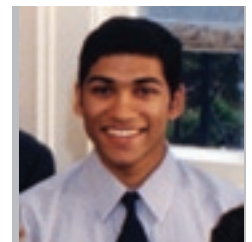
Jennifer VanOverbeke, who also received a Marcy award, says that after chemistry caught her attention at Northwestern, the challenge to understand it kept her enthralled. "My professors and research opportunities continued to inspire me



JENNIFER VANOVERBEKE

throughout my college career," says VanOverbeke, whose plans include a PhD in biochemistry followed by a career in the pharmaceutical industry working to discover new drugs. Nathan Gouwens, an Integrated Sciences Program major, was the third recipient of a Marcy award, which honors those who complete their junior year with the best record in experimental, observational, and mathematical sciences.

Paul Isaac, Kunal Karmali, and Lauren Mlsna won James Alton James awards for the best junior-year record in the social sciences. Karmali, a psychology major in the Honors



KUNAL KARMALI

Program in Medical Education, plans to become a doctor but says he also capitalized on his "great opportunity" at Northwestern to learn from scholars in such fields as history, philosophy, and literature. Like his fellow award winners, he stresses that Northwestern has not been all work and achievement—the most important thing he'll take with him is "the memories I have of my friends...the tom-foolery and crazy antics." Neil Schoenblum adds that his best memories include "great steaks from Pete Miller's; *War and Peace* à la Professor Gary Saul Morson; and during semester abroad, the ferry from Naples to Capri."



# STILL GOING AFTER CURES

AN INTERVIEW WITH BIOTECH GURU GEORGE RATHMANN

BY NANCY DENEEN



If he wished, George Rathmann '48 could retire today from the risky business of running biotechnology start-up companies. At age 75, he could bask in his reputation as a founding father of the industry and enjoy the prosperity his legendary success has brought. In the 1980s, as the first chief executive of Amgen, Inc., he helped develop Epogen, a red blood cell-producing drug used by dialysis patients suffering from anemia, and Neupogen, a white blood cell stimulator for chemotherapy patients. In the process he also turned the \$18 million start-up operation into a multibillion-dollar firm and the nation's largest independent biotech company. A decade later, he co-founded ICOS Corporation, a company which has produced Cialis, a competitor to Pfizer's Viagra, currently awaiting FDA approval. Today, he is still at biotechnology's forefront. As chairman of both Hyseq, Inc., a Silicon Valley gene discovery firm, and ZymoGenetics, a Seattle-based bioinformatics-driven company, he remains excited about guiding the discovery and development of new drugs with the potential to alleviate suffering.

As a scientist, Rathmann knows how to mine for gold among the tens of thousands of genes identified by the sequencing of the human genome. As a businessman, nicknamed "Golden Throat," he is a master at raising the capital needed to develop new drugs. Honoring both his accomplishments and his generosity, two years ago Northwestern created the George B. Rathmann Professorship in Chemistry, currently held by Chad Mirkin, a trailblazer in nanotechnology. When Rathmann returned to Northwestern in spring 2002 to receive an honorary doctor of science degree, he spoke with *Crosscurrents* about biotechnology, past and future. He also discussed the root causes of his loyalty to Northwestern.

**UPDATE US, PLEASE, ON THE PROGRESS OF THE BIOTECH COMPANIES YOU ARE INVOLVED IN.**

Both Hyseq and ZymoGenetics have spent a lot of energy trying to understand the human genome and the commercial implications of that information. Hyseq has

done a better job of gene discovery because that was our specialty, but Zymo is better at [long-range] thinking with these genes.

Hyseq created a new way of sequencing genes by hybridization, a very powerful and rapid process, and on that basis discovered 10,000 genes. Now we have to figure out what they're good for. We do know that we're going to have a priority position on a lot of genes because we were the first to discover them.

ZymoGenetics was an early subscriber to the Incyte Genomics database where they got their gene leads. They unleashed an organization very capable of analyzing what the genes might do, and which ones might be most interesting commercially. Zymo products are much better defined than Hyseq's, and a couple of them are very exciting. One is a potential treatment for lupus, a dreadful disease.

**HOW FAR IN THE FUTURE IS THE LUPUS TREATMENT?**

It is still rather visionary. Assuming that the drug passes through the first four stages of the FDA approval process, it will still be four or five years before it is on the market. And sometimes we stumble along the way. The mortality of drugs in development is not as bad as people say—you hear 1 in 1,000 or 1 in 500 makes it—but it's pretty serious. It depends on what kinds of molecules you're working with. Because Zymogenics mostly works with natural human proteins, we have a better batting average than most because we are curing things nature's way. Hopefully, we're going to supply a protein that the body isn't able to make or makes deficiently.

**DO YOU CONSIDER THE DEVELOPMENT OF EPOGEN AND NEUPOGEN TO BE YOUR GREATEST ACCOMPLISHMENTS?**

Key executives can provide the environment of discovery and reward risk-taking and innovation. But in the [discovery of Epogen and Neupogen] one can identify precisely the moment when someone else, not I, did the thing that was absolutely essential to making the discoveries.

Epogen and Neupogen are certainly two of the most



LEFT: DNA SEQUENCING PROCESS (STEP 5), GERALD BARBER, VIRGINIA TECH. COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION; RIGHT (FROM LEFT TO RIGHT): FRED BASOLO, IRV KLOTZ, GEORGE RATHMANN AND THE LATE FRED BORDWELL.

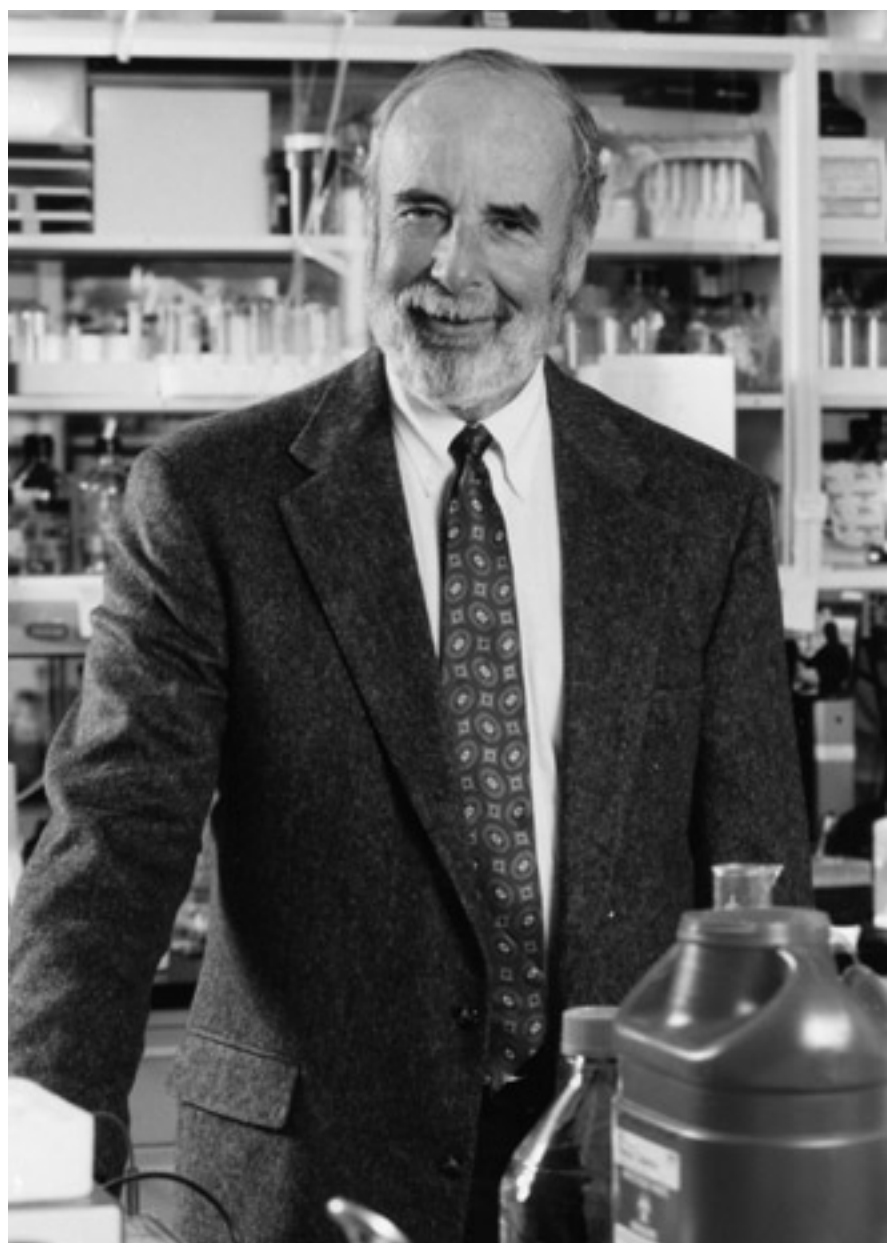
BELOW: GEORGE RATHMANN IN 1993 IN MOSAIC, CROSSCURRENTS' PREDECESSOR.

remarkable molecules I've ever come across. They are nature's way of solving problems with remarkable performance. The problem with antibiotics is that the better they get, the tougher it is when bugs become resistant to them. But with drugs like Epogen and Neupogen, there is no avoiding their benefits: they so closely resemble what nature wants you to have. So when your kidney function is deficient—you might have had your kidneys removed—suddenly there's a drug, Epogen, that you can buy that will perfectly replace what your body would like to be producing, namely erythropoietin. With Neupogen, instead of developing an antibiotic and then getting antibiotic resistance, GCSF [granulocyte colony stimulating factor] builds your body's own immune resistance by producing more neutrophils. A healthy person receiving a dose of GCSF will double his or her white cell count within about eight hours and have the ability to mount a tremendous immune response against a disease. The clinical studies on cancer patients treated with Neupogen were just miraculous. In the very first one, only those people in the control group got sick; the others who took Neupogen failed to have a single infection.

The other miracle about these natural proteins is that they are potent. When we built our first Epogen plant at Amgen, it was designed to produce seven ounces a year, which was sufficient to meet a huge demand for commercialization of the product. It turns out that for someone who no longer has kidneys, 500 milligrams [of Epogen]—the equivalent of one aspirin, one time—is all that's needed to solve the problem of anemia *for a whole lifetime*. So these are very potent molecules. They are very safe. They are nature's way of doing things, so the side effects are almost nonexistent.

#### HOW DID YOUR MENTORS AT NORTHWESTERN—ROBERT BURWELL, FREDERICK BORDWELL, IRV KLOTZ, AND FRED BASOLO—FIGURE INTO YOUR LATER SUCCESS?

I was always very impressed at Northwestern with the quality of the teaching. These were truly inspired teachers, and the students recognized this. We didn't have teacher evaluation sheets in those days...But there was no doubt that these were loved people. I was impressed with







their combination of being excited about the research while not ignoring their responsibilities as teachers.

Robert Burwell Jr. was my senior advisor and the one who pushed me away from medical school and into grad school at Princeton. I ended up winning the argument in the end, going back to medicine in the form of biotech. I think I was much better served by taking a PhD in physical chemistry at Princeton rather than going to medical school, because the part that really was exciting to me was the research.

Fred Bordwell was a spellbinding speaker in organic chemistry. People actually enjoyed organic chemistry when they took it from him. The pace of his presentation was absolutely dynamite, he knew the material, and he could present it at tremendous speed. With his enthusiasm and interest, he made organic chemistry wonderful. Irving Klotz was an advisor and on my thesis committee. I remember his patience and very careful questions. He certainly didn't want to embarrass me, but he wanted to find out if I knew anything at all. He found out there were a few things I knew. Fred Basolo was a great mentor. These four people were very wonderful: that's why the family foundation recognized them as the principal mentors that I had when I was here.

**YOU'VE BEEN SO GENEROUS TO NORTHWESTERN. WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO YOU TO ADVANCE THE RESEARCH HERE?**

I suppose it's blind loyalty (laughter). I was given a wonderful education that set the stage for my doctoral work at Princeton. And so I had a strong affection for the University and I still do and I know that the work that is being done—both the research and the teaching—is first-rate and I want to support it.

**IN WHICH AREAS OF DISEASE, INJURY, AND AGING DOES BIOTECHNOLOGY HOLD THE BIGGEST PROMISE?**

Our companies have resisted saying "I'm in the cancer field," or "I'm in the rheumatoid arthritis field," because when we are attacking a subject as basic as human genes, we really don't know where we're going to learn something of vital significance. It would be a crime to

pass up an area just because it's not our focus. ICOS's main interest turned out to be inflammation, although we really hadn't intended to limit ourselves to that. So I'm pretty biased toward the idea that you'd better be open-minded to anything that might affect human health and mitigate human misery.

It's tempting to think about just doing just good science for good science's sake. But the costs are such that you better have some idea of what you're going to commercialize.

When you come at it from the gene side, cancer is the natural target because it's not so hard to identify when a gene has an effect on cancer. Maybe we're looking at a gene because it's already manifested that effect. But certainly if we discovered a gene that would correct an inflammatory state such as a violent case of hives, and we've figured out what to do, we'd say, "Let's work on it."

**WITH ALL OF YOUR SUCCESSES, IS THERE ANYTHING THAT HAS ELUDED YOU?**

I've had a little trouble retiring.

*Editor's note: In February, Hyseq Pharmaceuticals merged with VARIAGENICS, Inc. to form Nuvelo, Inc. George Rathmann is chairman of the new company's board of directors.*





# PROFESSIONAL





**MARY FINN,  
ASSISTANT DEAN  
FOR UNDERGRADUATE  
STUDIES AND ADVISING**

BY NANCY DENEEN

# LINKAGE SEMINARS

**CONNECTED STUDENTS, HEATED DEBATES, CAREER INSIGHTS**

It is 6 p.m., and as the sun fades, the lights come on inside a classroom in Kresge Hall. Chairs are arranged in a semi-circle. Many students have arrived early, easing into chairs, and dropping backpacks on the floor. The smell of hot, fresh breadsticks—the class snack for the evening—permeates. The atmosphere is both casual and serious, as instructor Mark Sheldon begins the class on medical ethics by zeroing in on one of the week's front page stories. "The American Academy of Pediatrics," Sheldon says, "just came out with the recommendation that homosexual couples be able to adopt a child outside of that relationship, because it would be in the child's best interests. Is it appropriate for a medical society to comment on issues like this?" Thus begins an evening of intense discussion, which ends with a vigorous debate about physician-assisted suicide.

The seminar is one of nine Professional Linkage Seminars offered each quarter, designed to connect the students' liberal arts education with situations and questions they may encounter as they begin their professional lives. They are usually taught by experts working in a given field—law, medicine, business, the media, the arts, cultural institutions—rather than by Northwestern faculty. They are offered to Weinberg students and to students enrolled in Northwestern's other undergraduate schools.

"The seminars are not meant to be pre-professional, but to get students

to think about issues in professions," says Mary Finn, assistant dean for undergraduate studies and advising, who oversees the program. "Bronwyn Rae, the teacher of Myth and Metaphor in Medicine, for example, is an anesthesiologist, but she's not showing students how to put someone to sleep. She's teaching a literature class, examining writings by and about doctors." It is hoped that students interested in medicine will gain insights into how physicians come to a philosophy and understanding of their jobs and how this understanding influences their interactions with patients.

While business courses in any form fill up immediately, museum classes—more remote from most students' career interests—are generally a harder sell but elicit enthusiastic responses once the class is underway.

The classes, formerly called Senior Linkage Seminars, have been taught since the 1980s. They were re-energized and enlarged in scope two years ago after alumni emphasized their post-college value to former dean Eric Sundquist.

"They said they were so important, they wished the seminars had been available before their senior year," says Finn, who implemented the increase from three or four to nine a quarter and their availability to sophomores and juniors, as well as seniors. She also stirred up excitement for the program within the departments as they began

to think of new seminar topics and sought new faces outside the university who would be interested in teaching.

After a course has been taught once, its future offerings rest upon favorable reviews from former students. According to Finn, "tired" courses are quickly revitalized or replaced.

Seminar teachers are paid a modest stipend. There is no way the College could pay high-powered Loop attorneys for their time, says Finn; no one considers the time they put in preparing a course as billable hours. "People who seek out teaching in addition to a full-time job have energy and tend to be pretty charismatic. They're not doing it for the pay. They're not doing it for the glory. They're doing it because they want to teach."

Besides charisma, seminar teachers often bring friends and associates to the classroom. And they, in turn, bring perspectives that broaden and enrich the students' understanding of a given field.

The aim of the seminars is that students take from them a thoughtful and lasting consideration of the issues connected to a particular profession. "Some of attorney Bill Schiller's students write to him and say that their experiences in his classroom inspired them to go to law school or to do non-profit work in asylum law," says Finn. "And I think anybody who passes through Mark Sheldon's classroom is going to be a better doctor."



Photo: Gary Cochrane

**JUDITH MCBRIEN (LEFT)**  
**ARCHITECTURAL**  
**HISTORIAN,**  
**DOCUMENTARY**  
**FILMMAKER,**  
**LINKAGE SEMINAR**  
**TEACHER.**

**SCENES (RIGHT)**  
**FROM FINAL CLASS**  
**PRESENTATIONS FOR**  
**MCBRIEN'S COURSE**



## ONE STADIUM CONTROVERSY + EXPERTS FROM ALL SIDES

The renovation of Soldier Field, home of the Chicago Bears, nears completion. Bears fans will be whooping it up in their expanded arena in the fall. Judith Paine McBrien—architectural historian, documentary filmmaker, and Linkage seminar teacher—calls the renovation “the most prominent Chicago public works project in my lifetime.” It is also one of the most controversial, “a giant toilet bowl” inside the stadium’s classic Doric colonnades, according to some critics.

The battle between forces in favor of the newly designed stadium and those opposed to it has created as much heat as the legendary Bears-Packers rivalry. On the pro side have been city officials, owners of the Bears franchise, and fans who insist that a first-class city like Chicago needs a first-class football stadium, not one built in 1924 to house civic events and track meets. They say the added revenue from the newly configured

stadium, with expanded skyboxes and concessions areas, would help the team regain its competitive edge. Opponents, including Friends of the Parks and the Landmarks Preservation Council of Illinois, have argued that the new design is aesthetically objectionable and overpowers the surrounding Museum Campus. Most important, they say, Chicago residents—owners of the city’s lakefront—did not get a chance to voice their objections in a referendum. And citizens of Chicago are likely to be asked to pay the difference if the city’s hotel tax to finance the stadium should fall short in any given year.

McBrien, recent chair of the Landmarks Preservation Council, could see in the controversy an excellent chance for students to learn about the role advocacy groups play in the life of the city:

“In August 2001, Friends of the Parks had just brought a lawsuit against the Chicago Park District. The Landmarks Preservation Council was about to join them. And I thought, ‘Here’s something that’s real world, that involves the built environment and Chicago’s treasured lakefront that students can see.’”

The case, which went all the way to the Illinois Supreme Court, questioned whether public monies and public lands should be used to benefit private interests. In addition to involving the preservation of parks and a National Historic Landmark, it also brought up questions about what it means to be a citizen in a democracy: How is your voice heard? How can you create coalitions with others to make your viewpoint known? What are the issues you have to understand in order to put forth an articulate point of view?”



Photo: Jim Ziv





**“HERE’S SOMETHING THAT’S  
REAL WORLD, THAT INVOLVES  
THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT...  
THAT STUDENTS CAN SEE.”**

## **= ONE DYNAMIC SEMINAR**

To bring students up to speed on the issues, McBrien loaded them with required reading—“I was quite demanding: these were Northwestern students.” When they were ready, McBrien unleashed an impressive array of guest speakers on the students. Or was it the other way around?

Heads of Landmarks and Friends of the Parks told students why their groups considered the suit important and explained how they plotted their strategies. Soon after, the superintendent of the Chicago Park District and the mayor’s deputy chief of staff presented the city’s views. “Those classes were really terrific,” says McBrien. “There was such a contrast. And the students had learned enough to really be involved, to feel comfortable enough to challenge the speakers.”

Some of her media connections—Mary Field, executive producer of *Chicago Tonight*, and Kate Cahan

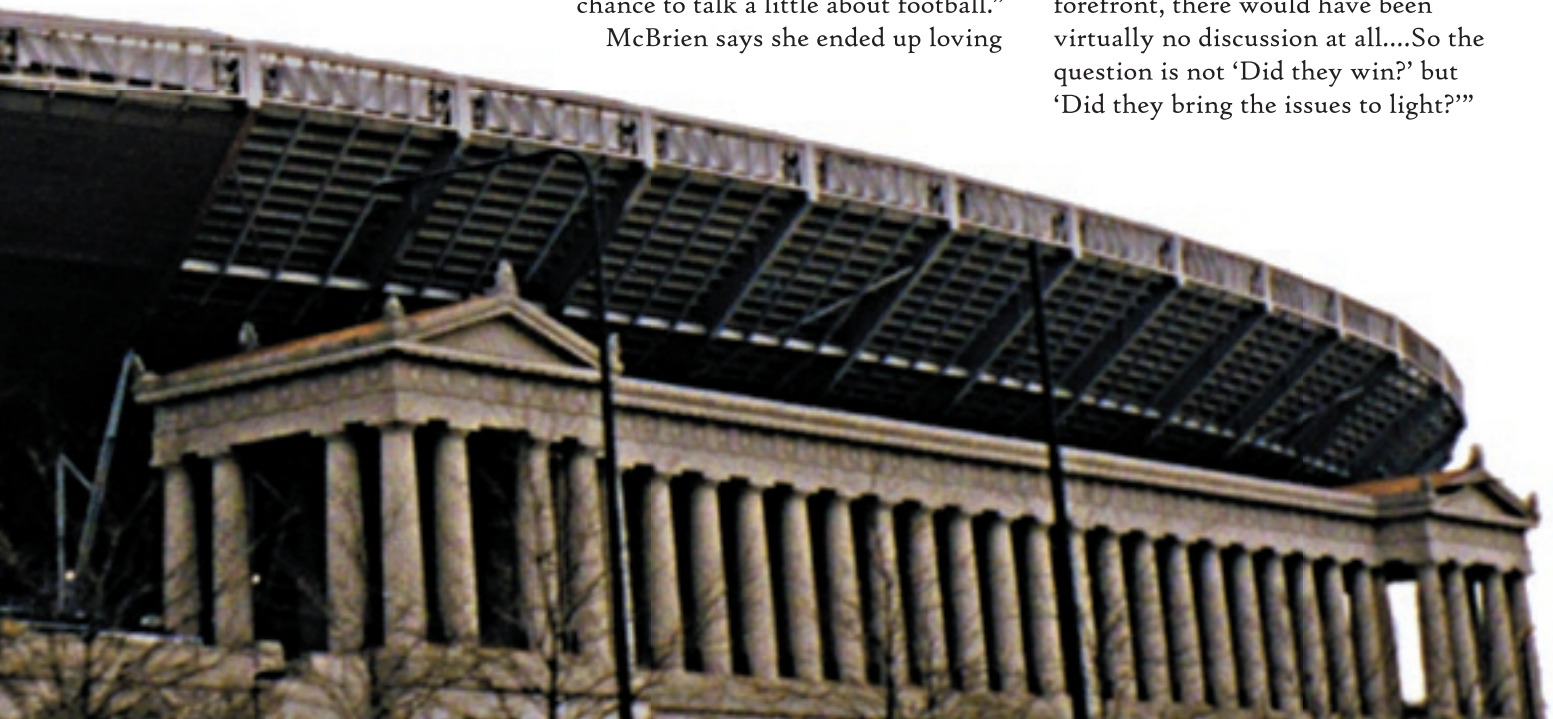
from WBEZ radio—showed students how advocacy groups can reach a broader audience by being part of their shows. Architects discussed stadium design around the world. Last came speakers on the financial issues: a sports consultant knowledgeable about bond issues, and a senior editor for *Sports Illustrated*. Students also read articles about whether or not a new stadium could be justified in terms of its dollar benefits to the city.

“I tried to be even-handed,” says McBrien. “Of course I told students my point of view and where I came from [she was against the stadium design], but I urged them to think for themselves.” There was an almost equal mix of male and female students in the class and a mix of opinions among students as well: “Many of the guys were Bears fans and I think the class initially appealed to them because it was a chance to talk a little about football.”

McBrien says she ended up loving

the experience, especially being surprised by the different strengths that students exhibited during their final advocacy presentation before an assembled group of experts. A quiet student suddenly showed a grasp of the financial issues. A communications major gave a stirring speech. “Letting the students shine—that was really fun,” says McBrien. She doesn’t know whether there are any budding civic advocates in the group, but she is convinced that students learned the importance of having a voice in public life.

In February, the suit brought by the advocacy groups lost on appeal in the Illinois Supreme Court. “It was an uphill fight from the beginning,” she concedes. In the end, she considers the groups’ actions a victory of sorts. “With no referendum, the citizens were precluded from having a voice. If these two small advocacy groups hadn’t brought the issues to the forefront, there would have been virtually no discussion at all.... So the question is not ‘Did they win?’ but ‘Did they bring the issues to light?’”





## ASIAN AMERICAN CINEMA

### MEETING STARS, FACING STEREOTYPES

On what he thought would be an ordinary Friday in February, junior Nikhil Jayaram found himself racing through rush-hour traffic from Evanston to Chinatown on Chicago's South Side. The quest was worth the effort: The radio/TV/film major got to sit down over tofu and broccoli with Gurinder Chadha, director of the new sleeper hit soccer movie *Bend It Like Beckham*.

"I found her inspiring," says Jayaram about the minority director from England whose film has already topped the box office charts in Britain, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa. Among other things, Chadha encouraged him to keep writing his own material. "Hearing a truly successful director's advice let me believe that my goals are attainable. Seeing how human she was allowed me to think that I don't have to hide myself or act differently to achieve success."

Jayaram's meeting with Chadha illustrates why the professional seminars have "linkage" in their name: the connection between student and mentor would never have been made without instructor Ben Kim and his Asian American Cinema course. Kim is a journalist and arts organizer. Through his work putting together Chicago's Asian American Showcase of films Kim had come across Chadha's work and had volunteered to handle grassroots publicity for one of her earlier films.

"Imagine my surprise when I

returned home on that Friday to find a message from Chadha, the very artist whose works we were studying that week in class," said Kim. "She was flattered that we study her films at such an elite institution; would we join her for dinner?" Before his own dash to Chinatown, Kim called his student about the rare chance to meet the director and "shamelessly" got together movie posters for Chadha to autograph. "I had a feeling he'd find some way to get there fast, and he did."

Jayaram and fellow classmates had many more chances to be inspired by high-profile Asian American actors and directors during the class. The second meeting, the guest speaker was Eddie Shin, familiar to students as a cast member of Fox's *That '80s Show* and as a recurring guest on the WB Television Network's *Gilmore Girls*. Appearing in jeans and a baseball cap, he surprised the class with his unpretentiousness, Kim says. He also brought a valuable dose of reality: the level of dedication necessary for success. For him, choosing acting meant shattering parental expectations that he become a doctor, lawyer, or engineer.

Other guests included filmmakers Abraham Lim and Masahiro Sugano. "I never know what guest speakers are going to say when they get here," says Kim. "But what they have all said, in some manner, is that the reason they're making films is to counteract either Asian Americans' invisibility or our stereotyped portrayal."

Kim himself, with the eight-year overview his work with the film festival affords, conveys to his students the

excitement that younger filmmakers are now bringing to their craft in moving beyond the familiar issues of identity and generational conflict. "They're getting on to more universal themes while not abandoning the Asian American specific," says Kim. "Justin Linn's film *Better Luck Tomorrow* is about high school students who happen to be Asian American, but that's not what shapes their character or what they do. The film is about their futures and second chances."

The course seems to have affected the students' futures as well, whether in encouraging them to make films or in just having their voices heard. Kellie Lim holds a coveted spot on the screening committee for this year's Chicago Asian American Film Showcase, a position Kim helped her obtain. Even though she doesn't aspire to be a film maker or actor—she'll attend medical school in the fall—she says that taking the film class has helped open her eyes to the stereotype of the "model minority." "We are depicted as docile and meek, but I am not like that," says Lim. "I will use my voice to create a bigger Asian American presence in society."



SCENES FROM (CLOCKWISE, FROM TOP LEFT): CHARLOTTE SOMETIMES; ABCD; BETTER LUCK TOMORROW.







## **BILL SCHILLER'S CLASS GETS STUDENTS HOOKED ON ASYLUM LAW**

Hi Bill!

This is Yliana. I was in your asylum class one year ago. Well, you'll never guess what I'm up to!! Remember, you had Maria Baldini speak to us as a guest lecturer and she spoke about ProBAR, and I told her how I lived in that area?? Well, I'm back in Texas now WORKING FOR PROBAR (as a paralegal)!! I absolutely LOVE this job; it's so incredibly fulfilling and amazing. Every single day, I go home feeling like I've helped someone out.

Last week, we won an asylum case; it was a man from Guatemala. That, Bill, was the greatest feeling in the world...winning. I don't want to know what losing one is like, but I know that's a reality I'll have to someday face.

Well, I just wanted to let you know you that you played a big role in setting me down this path.

Thank you!  
-Yliana Gonzales '02

When Bill Schiller received this e-mail recently from a former student, he was delighted but not surprised. His passion for representing those seeking asylum in the U.S.—evidenced in both his law practice and his Linkage class at Northwestern—is catching.

"Students from the class go on to do really neat things," says Schiller. One example: following completion of a class, one team of students approached him to prepare and research the pro bono case of a visiting scholar at Northwestern from the Sudan. The professor was awarded asylum and now teaches at the University of Michigan.

Asylees are refugees who are physically present in this country at the time they seek asylum, Schiller

explained. They are unwilling or unable to return to their home countries because of past persecution or a well-founded fear of persecution. They are often represented by not-for-profit organizations like the Midwest Immigrant and Human Rights Center. [Schiller's firm is somewhat unusual in combining a corporate practice in immigration law with a substantial practice in asylum law.] Their cases are prosecuted by lawyers from the Department of Homeland Security before immigration judges from the Department of Justice. Schiller estimates that about 30 to 35 percent of asylum cases are approved, but that an applicant's probability for success rises dramatically with competent representation.

"What distinguishes winning cases from the losers is the use of expert witnesses," Schiller told his class one recent evening. "Experts on country conditions can prove there's a well-founded fear of torture. Mental health experts can prove a victim has been damaged."

Mary Ann Joyce, from the Kovler Center for Survivors of Torture, told the class that her clients are usually between 20 and 40 years old. In the 1980s, many were from Guatemala and El Salvador. Last year, 46 percent were from African countries. "They are typically from large families, but they arrive here alone. Their symptoms are often an inability to sleep, flashbacks about their torture, fear of going outside, fear of police and others in uniform."

"A lot of clients are numb and unemotional," adds Schiller. "You have to bring in a therapist to describe why a client is numb...And you can't object to everything the other side says...The judges will stop listening to you."

Scott Portman of the Midwest Human Rights Center, the other guest speaker that evening, relayed details about a tortured man from Somalia who was seeking asylum. "A prosecutor was attacking the witness because he didn't know the specific dates of his torture. But many Somalis aren't concerned with dates," Portman explained. "They only know them in relation to the seasons. So we built a timeline based on the rainy season in Mogadishu."

Such tips from experts come in handy not only years later in a law career, but at the end of the quarter, when students stage mock trials before an immigration judge. Elizabeth Outes, a junior majoring in political science and international studies, says the mock trials made her realize the difficulty of arguing a case and the potentially arbitrary nature of the process. Her role—prosecutor in the case of a Salvadoran woman seeking asylum from political persecution—made her feel guilty because she had to attack the woman's credibility. "I was glad that the judge let her stay, even though that meant that I lost," says Outes. Taking the class has only strengthened her resolve to work someday at the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, a place where fellow asylum law student Laurie Jirak has just been awarded a coveted summer internship.









# A BOVINE MISHAP

BY BEN HUBBARD

A cow in heat and a non-castrated bull can be a dangerous combination. The story began one evening when the couple in question were strolling down by the reservoir. The bull started making advances on his lady friend, who, in an effort to get away, stumbled down the hill, crashed through the gate, and found herself inside our garden, followed by her suitor. Compared to the burned-off millet fields the cows were used to foraging through at this time of year, our garden must have struck them in the same way the Garden of Eden struck Adam and Eve on the dawn of the seventh day. Seeing God's bounty laid out before them, the cows turned from their sinful ways, opened their jaws, and started eating.

A kid herding his sheep nearby soon discovered the intruders, chased them out, and headed up to the village to tell the gardeners. While five of us gardened in the same area behind the reservoir, the Stranger worked the largest plot of land. No one remembers where the Stranger got his nickname; someone just called him that once and it stuck. As soon as the Stranger got the news, he inspected the damage and set up a trial with the Chief for the following morning.

But the trial never happened. As the crowd collected in front of the Chief's house the next day, the Stranger came to inform the Chief that he had pardoned the owner of the two cows. He gave the old men some cola nuts—large, red nuts with the stimulant power of oversized coffee beans—to thank them for coming. Then everyone went home.

Unfortunately, luxury is addictive, even for cows. Later that morning, the two cows returned to the garden accompanied by 16 of their closest friends. No mistake got them into the garden this time. They barged straight through the fence, lowered their jaws to the ground, and resumed their feast.

A group of kids discovered them a short time later, but 18 cows can trash a garden much faster than two. The kids chased the cows from the garden, rounded them up, and marched them toward the Chief's house. As soon as the Chief saw them coming, he guessed what had hap-

pened and sent his kids to alert the gardeners, call the cows' owner, and tell the old men. There would be no pardon this time. This much destruction required a trial.

Word of the trial spread through the village and the crowd in front of the Chief's house grew. In Nataré, the village in which I lived for two years as a Peace Corps volunteer, all business is public business. Everyone came to see how the conflict would be resolved.

The crowd collected in two groups. Behind the Chief, sitting on an overturned log and a few rickety chairs, sat the Gourma. Slightly apart, sitting on the ground, sat the Fulani.

Despite the fundamental differences between these two ethnic groups, they usually live together in relative harmony. The Fulani, being cattle herders, take care of the Gourma cattle during the dry season. In return, after the harvest, each Gourma gives a small share of grain—usually a basin of millet—to the Fulani who takes care of his cows. Then, when the rains come, the Gourma, who tend to be stronger farmers, help the Fulani plow their fields.

Although they never intermarry, individuals from the two groups often become friends and attend each other's weddings and ceremonies. On a daily basis, Gourmas and Fulanis don't spend much time together, mostly because Gourma social life revolves around millet beer, which the Muslim Fulani don't drink.

In spite of the ties linking these two groups, the Gourma predominate in the region. All village chiefs are Gourma and the Gourma control all the region's land. Each group has its own language, but Gourma is the dominant one. While all the local Fulani speak Gourma, rare is the Gourma who can even greet in Fulani. Rarer still is the Gourma who would consider it important to do so.

In general, the cultural symbiosis between the two groups functions with few problems. Most of the time the tension between them dwells below the surface, out of sight. But once in a while, something happens to drag it up into plain view, where everyone can see it, where it cannot be ignored.

The Chief rubbed his teeth with a chew stick as the

***“I REALIZED THAT MORE WAS AT STAKE IN THE TRIAL THAN JUST COMPENSATION FOR ONE DESTROYED GARDEN.”***



people of the village collected to watch the trial. Finally, Bedouma, the Fulani who owned the guilty cattle, walked up, greeted the Gourma as a group, and found a place to sit amongst the Fulani, whom he greeted individually.

The Chief pulled the stick from his mouth, spit between his teeth, and asked the Stranger to tell his side of the story.

The Stranger sat on a rock in the center of the group and began. Speaking softly as if in a private conversation with the Chief, he told about how hard he had worked in his garden, how he had received the news of the break-in, and what he had found when he went to inspect the damage. When he was done, the Chief thanked him and he returned to his seat.

Next, Bedouma sat on the rock and told his version of the events, in Gourma. Everyone listened for contradictions as he spoke but Bedouma couldn't deny that his cows had trashed the garden. In the end there was no disagreement about what had happened. The facts were clear; it was deciding the compensation that would be difficult.

When Bedouma had returned to his seat, the Chief asked the Stranger what compensation the gardeners were asking for.

“We want 85,000 francs (about \$118),” the Stranger said.

The crowd gasped at the large sum and the Fulani waved their fingers in the air. The Chief asked Bedouma for his response and the Fulani responded as a group, saying “suguli, suguli,” the Gourma word for “mercy.”

At that, the Gourma jumped to their feet, shouting that they would not pardon the Fulani this time. The Fulani yelled back, repeating their plea and denying that the garden had been worth as much as the Stranger claimed. Tempers on both sides flared, making everyone more adamant about their position. When I commented to one of the gardeners that the sum seemed high, he responded, “You don't know the Fulani. If we don't

make them pay this time, they'll do something even worse later. That's the way they are.”

As the two groups shouted back and forth, I realized that more was at stake in the trial than just compensation for one destroyed garden. The break-in had dredged up the hidden tensions between the Gourma farmers and the Fulani cattle herders. The Gourma were using the trial as a weapon to avenge innumerable past wrongs.

Sensing the imminent disintegration of the trial, the Chief stood up and suggested that the Fulani pay 30,000 francs—about \$42—but everyone was too busy shouting to hear him. He shrugged and fell back into his chair, unnoticed.

As the last traces of order drowned in the rising flood of altercation, the Stranger told the Chief he was taking the matter to the Canton Chief. He found a long stick, rounded up the 18 cows, and started walking. He crossed the millet fields to the road, walked through the valley, and followed the road for 15 kilometers, not stopping until he and the 18 cows arrived in front of the Canton Chief's house.

He had walked a long way before the shouts of those still arguing back in Nataré became inaudible.

The Stranger slept outside the Canton Chief's house that night with the eighteen cows. The next morning under the big shade tree, the crowd collected in two groups, the Fulani on one side, the Gourma on the other.

A while later, the Canton Chief sat in a padded lawn chair in front of the villagers and opened the trial. The Stranger spoke first, telling his version of the events, followed by Bedouma. Once again, there was no disagreement about the facts.

When Bedouma had finished, the Canton Chief asked the Stranger what compensation he and the other gardeners sought. The Stranger said they would accept 70,000 francs, about \$97. The Canton Chief nodded, as if amused by the large sum, and turned to Bedouma, who said he would pay 30,000 francs, about \$42.

Although the day before, the Stranger had hoped to get much more out of the Fulani, he now realized







that the Canton Chief would not accept any exorbitant suggestions. After discussing the matter with the other gardeners, the Stranger announced that they would accept the 30,000 francs. The crowd clapped as if pounding a communal gavel and the Fulani said they would bring the money in two weeks. Many of the Gourma speculated that Bedouma would have to sell a sheep to get the necessary sum.

To conclude the trial, the Canton Chief collected money from all the concerned parties to buy millet beer and cola nuts. A local woman distributed drinking calabashes and a young man scooped up servings of the locally brewed beer for everyone present, except, of course, the Fulani. Once the Gourma had been served, the Canton Chief offered the Fulani their share of the cola nuts. As they divided them amongst themselves, Bedouma picked up his stick, rounded up his 18 cows, and headed off through the bush, back to Nataré.

In front of the Canton Chief's house, the Gourma sucked down beer after beer. As they drank, the ongoing conflict between the farmers and the cattle herders slipped back below the surface, out of sight, where it would hide painlessly until the next time something propelled it, screaming and shouting, back to the forefront of people's minds.

*Editor's note: Ben graduated from Northwestern in 1999 with a major in history and a specialization in contemporary Africa. He joined the Peace Corps soon after graduation, and in September 1999 left for Togo, West Africa. He lived in Nataré, a village in northern Togo, for two years, working with farmers and herders to develop more efficient agricultural practices. The preceding story, is one of several he wrote during a stay in Senegal following his Peace Corps experience.*

*"Northwestern's wonderful Program of African Studies taught me a lot about understanding Africa...how to approach the place as an outsider, how to avoid the common pitfalls and misunderstandings," says Ben. Now back in the States, he misses "the hospitality, the free time, the sense of community; the feeling that I'm doing something not only interesting, but important; sleeping under the stars." He recently finished a book about life in Nataré, The Blacksmith's Children, which he describes as being "like Hoop Dreams, but it's about Africa and there's no basketball." As he shops the book to publishers, he's working two jobs and studying Arabic. He'd like to return to Africa someday.*



**TOP: GOURMA GARDEN. RIGHT: BEN HUBBARD (RIGHT) WITH BEST FRIEND AND FELLOW GARDENER, TCHINDI YANDJA.**







## SOME CANDID THOUGHTS ON TEACHING NORTHWESTERN-STYLE

**I**n putting together a new view-book for prospective students, Weinberg College wanted to convey the excitement of student-teacher collaboration, in which the energy and new ideas flow both ways. We recorded a conversation on the subject between two of our faculty members, leading researchers who also care deeply about teaching. *Crosscurrents* invites readers to listen in on part of that conversation between award-winning teachers Nicola Beisel, a sociologist and director of the American Studies program, and Edward Gibson, a political scientist specializing in Latin America.

*What's it like teaching NU students?*

**G** They're smart. But it's important to say things that kind of shatter their world view and force them to address big questions.

**B** Many are passionate. In some ways, you want students to let go of their passions and develop an objective stance toward the things that motivate them. But at the same time, becoming passionate about ideas and knowledge is what actually makes them exceptional students.

**G** When you engage students emotionally, you engage them intellectually. It can be forcing them to

rethink what they're doing or bringing up issues that are close to home. Or even showing movies that will get half the class angry. I usually choose polemical dramas. One is about Brazilian slum children, a very graphic movie that's unpleasant to watch. I have seldom seen a movie that has made students want to read about Brazilian politics more than that one. When students suddenly see at an individual level what's going on in the streets of Brazil, they also start making sense of social science concepts like "corporatism," "developmentalism," or "party systems."





Photo collage: Matthew Gilson

*Do you get sociology students who are passionate about changing society?*

**B** Yes. One of the interesting things about gathering data or writing papers is that you become aware of your presumptions about the world and find out that you're wrong and then you have to think in a more sophisticated way. Hopefully, our students will still

care a lot about changing the world after taking our courses, but at least their research will leave them with an enriched version of how the world actually operates.

*Do your teaching and research connect?*

**G** I won a grant to go to Mexico for a year. When I tally what I did in terms of research, it's not

bad. But when I think of how that year affected my teaching, the effect has been tremendous—in the lecture materials, insights, and opportunities I can provide to my students. That's a case of research enriching teaching. And this says a lot about teaching at a research university. Teaching at Northwestern should be better than anywhere else, not in spite of the



**“WHAT I TRY TO DO IS  
INTRODUCE THEM TO THEORY  
THAT MAKES SENSE  
OUT OF THE FACTS.”**

*- Edward Gibson*

fact that Northwestern is a research university, but because of it.

**B** I was working on a senior honors thesis with a student and she actually gave me the topic of my current book, pretty much inadvertently. I sent her off to study how in the 19th century different participants in the debate about abortion thought about gender. When she came back she said they were talking about eugenics. It took me forever to decode this statement because it meant they were talking about race in a way that most social scientists do not. And my book has another chapter that’s going to be co-authored with a different student, now in the graduate program at Berkeley, because she wrote such a brilliant senior honors thesis.

*How do you know when your teaching has been successful?*

**G** In political science we’re always faced with a dilemma between theory and real politics. When undergraduates first take a course on Latin American or European politics they want to know facts about the countries. But pretty soon they complain that there are

too many facts. So what I try to do is introduce them to theory that makes sense out of the facts. One way I know I’ve connected successfully is when they start to talk to me in ways that reveal their new understanding. They’ll say, “Wow, I never thought about it that way” or suddenly they’ll have a much stronger theoretical sense about things.

**B** I had an amazing experience when I came back from a research leave at the National Humanities Center. I said to students in my American Studies seminar the first day of class, “If you want, I’ll treat you like undergraduates: we’ll read books and you’ll write papers on the books and we’ll have a test at the end of the course. Or if you want, I’ll treat you like graduate students: I’ll assume you are doing the reading and your final paper will be an original contribution to knowledge based on primary sources.” And they did it in nine weeks.

**G** Wow.

**B** They just said, “We want to be treated like graduate students” and they really did it. One of the papers won a prize from the Midwestern Sociological Association.

*What’s a teacher’s view of a liberal arts education?*

**B** Really, the reason people get jobs is that they learn to think and argue and analyze—those are the most important skills we give our students. And hopefully what I’m doing in my research is something they’ll also learn in my classes. Learning to think through piles of information and make sense of it and then using that understanding to think differently about a question that was posed to them: that’s the fundamental skill in business and law and anything else.





**WILLIAM HAARLOW, DIRECTOR OF COLLEGE-ADMISSION RELATIONS, PROVIDES THE LATEST ADMISSION STATISTICS AND POINTS OUT THE POSITIVE TRENDS BEHIND THE NUMBERS:**

# ADMISSIONS TRENDS 2002–2003

YEAR	APPLICANTS	ADMITS	% ADMITS	ENROLLS	YIELD %
2000	8815	3016	34.2	999	33.1
2001	8231	3027	36.8	1104	36.5
2002	8547	2877	33.7	1157	40.2
2003	8647	2759	32.9	1082	39.2

## **SELECTIVITY INCREASING**

“Admission figures rarely move in a straight line, but there are several key trends to note. First, while the number of applicants to Weinberg College and the number of first-year students enrolling in Weinberg over the last four years have been fairly constant, the number of students admitted to the college has been falling, especially in the last two years. This increased selectivity is driven by a second trend: the growing percentage of students who accept our offer of admission, which is known as our “yield.” As recently as 2000 about one-third of admitted students decided to come to Weinberg. In the last two years we’ve moved up to a 40% yield. In short, because more students say ‘yes’ to us after we say ‘yes’ to them, we’ve had to reduce the number of students we can accept.”

YEAR	2000	2001	2002	2003
SCORE	1382	1388	1385	1397

## **SATs ON THE RISE**

“Another trend is the increasing quality of the students attending Weinberg. SAT scores are admittedly an imperfect measure of student quality, but they are one of the few consistently quantifiable proxies we have for quality. (High school class rank and G.P.A. are also problematic for numerous reasons.) It is encouraging to see that, over time, the average combined verbal and math SAT score for enrolling freshmen has been going up, and is now nearly 1400 out of a possible ‘perfect’ 1600.”

## **TELLING OUR STORY**

“These three trends: a declining admittance rate; an increasing yield; and rising quality as measured by average SAT scores, all tell a promising story. By more effectively communicating our academic distinctions—through more personalized contacts, increasingly attractive programs for prospective and admitted students, and stronger recruiting—we will continue to attract higher quality students. Attracting superior students is important because they bring real benefits to the learning environment in Weinberg College: they challenge their peers and their professors to higher levels of achievement; they have a greater ability to conduct independent research; and they are more likely to take advantage of the many opportunities here.”



**JUDD A. AND MARJORIE  
WEINBERG COLLEGE OF ARTS  
AND SCIENCES**  
NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY  
1918 SHERIDAN ROAD  
EVANSTON, ILLINOIS  
60208-4020

**EDITOR**  
NANCY DENEEN

**DESIGNER**  
CARY COCHRANE  
COCHRANE CREATIVE

**EDITORIAL SUPPORT**  
ROSEANN MARK  
UNIVERSITY RELATIONS

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