



Boston University Arts & Sciences

725 Commonwealth Avenue
Boston, MA 02215

Nonprofit
U.S. Postage
PAID
Boston MA
Permit No. 1839

Boston University Arts & Sciences

arts & sciences

SPRING 2011

INSIDE:

PUMP UP THE VOL(TAIRE)
From North Dakota's prairies, a unique radio show for everyday philosophers. p 10

MATERIAL GIRL
"Plarn" woven from newspaper sleeves is only one medium this inventive sculptor uses. p 16

FIRST RESPONDER
Healing leader: U.S. Navy rear admiral brings medical care to millions worldwide. p 20



Give her the chance to make a difference.

Thanks in great part to support from alumni donors, 43 percent of BU students receive financial aid awards.

Immersed in a tradition of service, these scholars go on to found nonprofits, alleviate illness, shed light on political discourse, and change the way the world thinks about literature, art, and global cultures.

Support students who are poised to make an impact.
Give online today at bu.edu/giving.

Boston University Annual Giving

Tolerate?
How
thy
neighbor.

But how do we do that?
A leading scholar shows us how to begin.
p 12



features


**PUMP UP
THE VOL(TAIRE, H)UME**

Jack Russell Weinstein (GRS'96, '98) tackles life's big questions with professional and amateur philosophers alike on his call-in radio show *Why?*, broadcast live from North Dakota.


**LOVE *Tolerate?* THY
NEIGHBOR**

Religion Professor Adam Seligman brings together believers and non-believers from across the globe to face their differences and promote religious tolerance.


MATERIAL GIRL

Sculptor Jodi Colella (CAS'81) feels the artistic possibilities in a variety of textures, exploring unconventional materials to weave and shape unique creations.

profiles

7 A SPARKLING RÉSUMÉ

With study abroad stints, multiple internships, volunteer posts—and now a pageant crown—to her credit, senior Annie Rupani is already a citizen of the world.

**18 THE BOOTBLACK, THE PRESIDENT,
AND THE LAWYER**

Chester Parasco's (CAS'47, LAW'47) colorful family has a long history with BU, beginning when his father shined President Daniel Marsh's shoes.

20 FIRST RESPONDER

Rear Admiral Christine Hunter (CAS'80, MED'80) takes charge, from directing emergency responses to a swine flu pandemic and a tsunami to developing nationally acclaimed programs for wounded military personnel.

a&s insider

- 2 Ideas to Write Home About** What defines the role and meaning of a house or home? Art Historian Kim Sichel gathers scholars from a range of fields to lend their perspectives.
- 4 Original Thinking** With the help of a Howard Hughes grant, Paul Lipton and his students have a new neuroscience lab to conduct hands-on brain research.
- 5 The Remarkable Wolfgang Amadè** Comprehensive and highly readable, Professor of Music Royce Wates's recently published book on Mozart is getting rave reviews.
- 5 Uneven Sacrifice** In the new book he's co-authored, political scientist Douglas Kriner establishes the facts and contributing factors of the war casualty gap between the rich and the poor.
- 6 Name That Tune** Neuroscientist Tim Gardner's research on how birds' brains encode song patterns could shed light on human brain function too.
- 8 Reflections of a Dean** In her "senior year" as Dean of Arts & Sciences, Gina Sapiro talks about what it takes to lead effectively, the College's advances over the last four years, and her vision of what's next for CAS/GRS.

about alumni

- 22** Good Times and High Honors
23 Class Notes

the last word

- 25** Proofreading the President for Posterity

arts&sciences

SPRING 2011 | NUMBER 25

Published by the Boston University College and Graduate School of Arts & Sciences

DEAN OF ARTS & SCIENCES
Virginia Sapiro

DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS
Patrick Farrell

COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST
Jeremy Schwab

EDITOR
Jean Hennelly Keith

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS
Jeffrey L. Cruikshank, Mark Dwortzan (COM'98), Rachel Johnson (MET'11), Patrick L. Kennedy (COM'04), Annie Laurie Sánchez, Jeremy Schwab, Corinne Steinbrenner (COM'06), Andrew Thurston

ART DIRECTOR
Rachel York

Produced by Boston University
Creative Services

♻️ Printed on paper containing postconsumer recycled material.

WRITE TO US

We welcome your letters, which will be edited for clarity and length for this publication. Letters will appear in full online on the Arts & Sciences website at www.bu.edu/cas/magazine. We also welcome your story ideas. Please email the Editor at jkeith@bu.edu or write to the Editor, *arts&sciences*, Boston University, 985 Commonwealth Avenue, Room 145, Boston, MA 02215. Please include your name, address, and BU school(s) and class year(s).

Correction: In the Fall 2010 issue (page 15), Proxima Centauri is incorrectly described as being 4.3 million light-years away from Earth. The correct distance is 4.3 light-years away.

from the dean



Hard to believe, but this spring marks the completion of my fourth academic year as Dean of the College and Graduate School of Arts & Sciences. If I were an undergraduate, I would be a senior now, and like most seniors, I can't help looking back to see how far I've come and what I've accomplished during my decanal odyssey.

Recollecting my first days on campus, I, like most first-year CAS students, faced the sometimes daunting vastness and complexity that is the College of Arts & Sciences—the single largest entity at Boston University. CAS alone is larger than any number of other colleges and universities. But because of the warm welcome BU's faculty, staff, students, and alumni offer newcomers, my initial angst soon gave way to an appreciation of a wonderful new universe of people and programs, of outstanding educators and focused, committed students who create this marvelous academic community in Boston, one of America's most dynamic and beautiful cities.

I'm thrilled to be a member of this distinguished university and honored that I have been able to serve it and contribute to its continued growth and development. Now, with our new strategic plan in place that charts our path for the next ten years, I look forward with great optimism and pride in our future in the College and Graduate School of Arts & Sciences at Boston University.

Like our graduating seniors, after four years of challenging work, I've given much thought to what's next. For many of our seniors, it's graduate school or a first job. For me, it's an opportunity to build on what I've learned about Arts & Sciences in my first four years and to work with the faculty, staff, alumni, and the next generations of students to continue our progress. To make this work, we'll be striving harder than ever to reach out to all of our friends, which means creating more chances for me to meet with you, our alumni in all parts of the country, communicating better about our goals and accomplishments, and providing new opportunities for you to engage with our faculty members and students through a series of special events.

I look forward to meeting you at many of these events and to hearing your personal senior-year retrospectives as well as your ideas about how we should move ahead.

Virginia Sapiro
Dean of Arts & Sciences

**On page 8, Dean Sapiro talks with arts&sciences about her experiences as Dean of Arts & Sciences and her vision for its future.*

 VISIT THE COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES WEBSITE AT www.bu.edu/cas.



Mac's First House, East River, 1992, gelatin silver print. From *Fragile Dwelling* (Aperture: 2000). Photos of houses by Margaret Morton © OmbraLuce LLC

Ideas to Write Home About

Art historian explores what makes a house a home.

Homestead, homecoming, homesick, homemade. These words may evoke familiar rooms, faces, fragrances, and much more. For Kim Sichel, such terms, and all they conjure, are



Kim Sichel

part of an extended conversation about the meaning of domestic space in the United States. That conversation's forum is a roundtable series called *House & Home in American Culture*. "We want to bring students and faculty together around the table and give them a chance to talk about ideas," says Sichel, an associate professor of art history and director of BU's American & New England Studies Program (AMNESP), which hosts the series throughout this academic year. Those ideas center on what defines the role of the house or home today, from log cabins to tenement housing, suburban McMansions to the White House.

Funded by the BU Humanities Foundation and the College of Arts & Sciences, *House & Home* is the 2010-11 incarnation of AMNESP's annual presentation series. Past years have forgone a unifying topic, but often that meant members of the different affiliated disciplines—art history, anthropology, literature, history, historic preservation, etc.—went to events related to their particular fields and interacted little. "I thought if we had a kind of series structured around this idea of house and home in American culture, we could get these different disciplines talking to each other," says Sichel.

Though two of the speakers—photographer Margaret Morton and scholar Alan Trachtenberg—tie in with Sichel's specialization in photography, presentations run the gamut, from history and literature to art and architecture. "I really like the interdisciplinary aspect of it," says Jessica Roscio (GRS'11), an art history doctoral student of Sichel's who handles many of *House & Home*'s logistics. She adds that participating alleviates the sense that she's "not doing enough outside of my area."

While Sichel kicked off the series in September by leading a discussion of Gaston Bachelard's *The Poetics of Space*,

a 1958 philosophical treatise on the significance of architectural elements, subsequent sessions addressed contemporary issues or delved further into the past. In October, Morton, the second speaker, shared her poignant documentation of temporary dwellings built by the homeless of New York City. BU professors Hunt Howell (English)

and Charles Capper (history) followed in November, drawing the discussion back in time—through the works of Harriet Beecher Stowe and Henry David Thoreau—to examine nineteenth-century understandings of domestic space. The 2010 sessions concluded in December with Trachtenberg, Neil Grey Professor Emeritus of English and

a+s

American Studies at Yale, who presented on the domicile-centric work of photographer and poet Wright Morris (1910-98).

Sichel's thematic organization has successfully appealed to a broad group. Attendees have represented all of the disparate American studies fields, as well as the College of Fine Arts and beyond. "I've been really pleased with people coming from all over campus," says Sichel. She adds that students are not the only ones intrigued: Faculty, she notes, "don't get a chance to hear each other's work very often, so it's really been a treat."

In the end, Sichel hopes to sow the seeds of further exploration. "The conversa-

tions are continuing outside of the events themselves. People have been saying, 'We went home and we were still thinking about this, and it really had us thinking in different ways.' So that's been very satisfying—it's what I hoped would happen." The spring sessions promise nuances in the conversation, with visits from New York Architectural



Wanda and Juice's House, 1991, gelatin silver print. From *Fragile Dwelling* (Aperture: 2000).

League Executive Director Rosalie Genevro and Assistant Professor of History Ella Howard of Armstrong Atlantic State University, who will discuss homelessness and tenement living, as well as a session led by two BU professors. Attendees are sure to wind up with an idea or two to take home. —Annie Laurie Sánchez



LISTEN TO PODCASTS OF THE HOUSE & HOME SESSIONS AT
www.bu.edu/amnesp/resources/events/house-and-home-in-american-culture-series.

Original Thinking

With the help of a \$1.5-million grant, CAS undergrads have a new neuroscience lab space for hands-on research.

Jeffrey Wessell (CAS'11, SAR'11) prefers labs over lectures, and under his advisor, Paul Lipton, he's had the chance many undergrads never get—to engage in hands-on research. And he's not alone. As part of the growing push to involve BU undergraduates in research as early as possible, the neuroscience program has renovated lab space and overhauled the program to focus increasingly on applied research at the undergraduate level.

In addition to the 270 students now majoring in neuroscience, Lipton anticipates that about 85 more will enroll in the program for the upcoming academic year. This number represents a dramatic increase for a program that was created less than three years ago with only 17 students. Wessell, who will graduate this May with a double major in neuroscience and health science, says that students at every level want to do hands-on research, and Lipton, the neuroscience program's associate director, agrees. "To appreciate the nature of science and the processes of discovery that are the heart of neuroscience," he says, "it is essential that students *do* rather than see or read about or listen to. And the earlier they are exposed to this process, the better equipped they are."

The new neuroscience courses and lab space are funded in part by a \$1.5-million grant to Boston University from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute through the Precollege and Undergraduate Science



Hands-on research: With Paul Lipton's guidance, Boston high school students examine sheep brains in a new neuroscience lab funded partly by a Howard Hughes grant.

Education Program, awarded in May 2010. The goal of the grant is to engage undergraduates in research early and often in their college careers, and to create the labs, courses, and faculty positions to support them. A large portion of the lab renovations include state-of-the-art lighting and technology upgrades that support the neuroscience program's areas of focus, initiatives like Alzheimer's research, studies on the brain and addictions, and investigations into the mind and memory loss. Lipton, other faculty leaders, and new neuroscience postdoctoral faculty fellows who also are funded by the grant, spent the early part of this year designing and preparing the new lab courses.

The refurbished lab space and program will open to BU undergraduates in the fall of 2011. This spring, the lab hosted some twenty science-minded local high school students in a program designed by Dana Gannon (CAS'11) and Matthew Cobb (CAS'11) for their Senior Independent Work for Distinction. The program aimed to expose

tenth and eleventh graders to the neurosciences and the experience of a university campus, and Lipton expects that his undergraduates also gained invaluable experience, "thinking about and comparing the value of hands-on experiences versus lectures, and how students learn best," he says. This summer, five of those high school students will be chosen to continue working in the lab.

Wessell says he likes the direction the program is taking, allowing students to "further their undergraduate education in a nontraditional way." Lipton is pleased with the program's expansion because, he says, the changes get to the heart of what education should be. "Sitting through lectures is a largely passive process," he explains. "We risk disengagement and nurturing expectations of 'Just tell me what I need to know for the exam.' Science is about discovery. My hope is that our students will learn not only how to ask questions about the brain, but that they will become good and responsible consumers of science in general, and active thinkers in all areas of their lives."

—Rachel Johnson

Photo by Kaiman Zabarsky

The Remarkable Wolfgang Amadè

Professor of Music Royce Wates's new book, *Mozart: an Introduction to the Music, the Man, and the Myths* (Amadeus Press, 2010),



takes a comprehensive look at the life, musical gifts, and historically tumultuous times of Wolfgang Amadè—the usage Joannes Chrysostomus Wolfgangus Theophilus Mozart preferred. In addition to a lively biography, Wates offers guided study of 20 musical compositions representing every major genre of that era. The book includes numerous letters, newly translated by the author, providing an intimate glimpse into Mozart's personal and professional life. For the non-musician reader, or those not so familiar with Mozart and his music, Wates offers clear definitions of musical terms, making *Mozart* most accessible.

Writes British reviewer Philip Borg-Wheeler in *Classical Music* magazine: "As in a good novel, the author draws the reader into the lives and inter-relationships of her characters—Mozart, his family, and colleagues—and engagingly describes the cultural milieu. I cannot recommend this outstanding book too highly."

—Jean Hennelly Keith

Uneven Sacrifice

America's poorest communities pay a disproportionate share of war's ultimate cost.

In his film *Fahrenheit 9/11*, Michael Moore approaches U.S. congressmen and asks if they will enlist their own kids in the army to fight in Iraq. It's one of the many ways Moore emphasizes his point that America's rich and powerful sit back while the poor and marginalized die in their wars. It's an argument often made by the political left, but when Assistant Professor of Political Science Douglas Kriner began looking for evidence to support the claim, he found only a small number of conflicting studies. So he and a colleague, MacArthur Foundation Research Fellow Francis Shen, decided to find and analyze wartime data themselves.

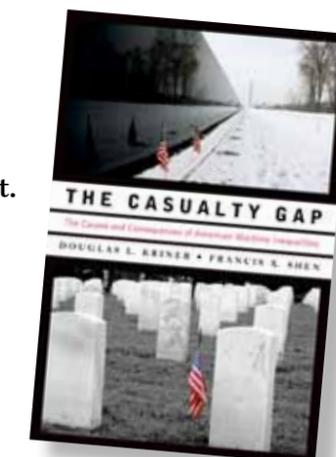
The result of their work appears in their 2010 book, *The Casualty Gap: The Causes and Consequences of American Wartime Inequalities*. By carefully comparing census data to military casualty data from World War II and the wars in Korea, Vietnam, and Iraq, the authors demonstrate that American communities with low income and education levels have long borne a greater portion of war deaths than have other communities. "It's not the case," says Kriner, "that wealthy areas of the country have no share of the sacrifice in these wars. That said, it is about a 50-percent-smaller share than what's been suffered by the poorest of America's communities."

Kriner's data show this casualty gap emerging during the Korean War and widening ever since. Contributing to the gap, he says, are the military's offers of education and good pay—offers that appeal most to the socioeconomically disadvantaged—and military placement practices that often put less-educated soldiers on the front lines.

After establishing the existence of a socioeconomic casualty gap, Kriner and Shen set out to understand its consequences. To explore how greater public knowledge of casualty inequality might affect popular support for war, the researchers conducted a series of experiments. In one phone survey, they told respondents how many casualties America suffered in each of its recent wars

and then asked how many casualties the respondents would deem acceptable in a hypothetical future war with Iran. The average number of casualties acceptable to the control group in the experiment was 28,206. For a second group of respondents who were given additional information about the casualty gap, the average number of acceptable casualties was 16,923—a 40-percent reduction. From this and other experiments, the researchers conclude that "Americans are disturbed by casualty inequalities." Kriner further argues that more Americans need to know these inequalities exist: "American citizens are called upon to make some sort of cost-benefit calculation when we decide whether or not to send our fellow citizens into harm's way, and we need to be aware of the full cost of doing so. Inequality is part of that cost."

The final section of Kriner's book explores the impact of war casualties on the civic life of hard-hit communities. By comparing Vietnam casualty data with several years of National Election Survey data (and controlling for a host of factors), Kriner found that residents of communities with high casualty rates later reported lower levels of trust in the federal government, of political interest, and of voting participation than did other Americans. It's unclear if today's wars will produce similarly depressing effects on political engagement, but the possibility, says Kriner, is "incredibly troubling." Socioeconomically disadvantaged communities have less voice in politics to begin with, he says, so society should do more to ensure that wartime losses don't further limit their much-needed political influence. —Corinne Steinbrenner



READ ABOUT UNDERGRADUATE NEUROSCIENCE RESEARCH IN THE STUDENTS' OWN WORDS AT THE UNDERGRADUATE NEUROSCIENCES JOURNAL, *THE NERVE*, AT www.bu.edu/thenerve.



READ REVIEWS AND NEWS COVERAGE OF *THE CASUALTY GAP* AT www.casualtygap.com.

Name That Tune

A neuroscientist at CAS is figuring out how birds know which songs to sing.

By Mark Dwortzan

A picture may be worth a thousand words, but a single image produced by neuroscientist Tim Gardner can capture as many as 1,500. In his case, though, the “words” in question are the distinct vocalizations of a songbird, represented in visual form.

Gardner, an assistant professor of biology, uses these images to understand how birds build and retain the songs they use to communicate with one another. His work could shed light on how the neural circuits of learning and memory are encoded and maintained not only in birds, but also in humans—potentially boosting our understanding of the normal and diseased states of the human brain.

Gardner has chosen to focus his investigations on birds, rather than laboratory mice, or even humans, because few organisms exhibit such a quantifiable behavior. “In the last two years we have succeeded in translating sound into a new kind of image to capture the structure and the variants of birdsong,” he says, “and we’re now at the point where we can detect subtle changes in specific birdsongs.”

Toward that end, Gardner subjects a colony of about 300 zebra finches and canaries—kept in soundproofed cages—to a variety of computer-controlled, quantitative behavioral experiments in BU’s Laboratory of Neural Circuit Formation.

In one experiment, Gardner studied canaries raised in isolation from birdsong. While “tutoring” the birds with computer-generated, synthetic songs that depart from species-typical songs, he and his lab recorded every sound the birds uttered through their development. Initially, the subjects imitated the synthetic songs with great accuracy, but as they matured, they reverted to species-typical songs, even in the absence of other canaries.

“There’s a complex program that ultimately builds each species-specific song,” Gardner says, noting that both genetic and environmental factors contribute to the process. “We’re interested in determining the local neuronal rules that govern this amazing process.”

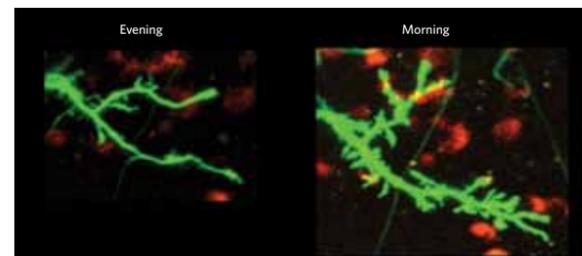
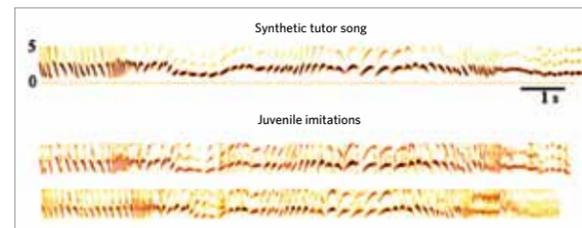
To home in on these rules, Gardner is now investigating regions of the brain that encode song patterns. These areas produce a dynamic pattern of song while the birds are singing—and also, surprisingly, when they are asleep. Gardner has produced time-lapsed images of neuron growth in vivo which show the development of new neuronal processes in sleep.

Gardner hopes to learn more about the growth of these processes by introducing small perturbations to the spontaneous activity that



occurs during birds’ sleep, and then by observing the impact of those perturbations on their neural networks and songs. As the bird dreams of its own songs, or sings upon awakening, a computer detects the sleeping pattern and triggers a stimulating electrode or implanted optical fiber to induce slight changes in neuronal electrical activity at specific locations in the song pathways.

“If we can increase or decrease the neuronal activity of the bird during sleep, we can see if there’s a change in the sequential order—and creativity—of the songs it produces,” says Gardner, noting that such studies could help us understand how similar neuronal changes in humans might impact our performance during the day.



Tim Gardner and his colleagues notated the song patterns of juvenile canaries, top diagram, that had never heard normal species-specific songs, and found that they imitated abnormal synthetic songs with great accuracy, even when the tutor songs lacked phrasing, or what Gardner’s team calls “short stereotyped syllables” that are repeated as the bird sings.

A newborn cell tagged with green fluorescent protein, above, shows overnight growth in a song control center of the zebra finch brain as observed in vivo before sleep, left, and after a good night’s rest, right.

Images courtesy of Tim Gardner

This article first appeared in Boston University Research 2010.

A Sparkling Résumé

CAS senior adds a pageant win to her already impressive list of accomplishments.

By Corinne Steinbrenner

Annie Rupani (CAS’11) is a former United Nations intern, an outreach officer for the Islamic Society of Boston, and a student ambassador at the Howard Thurman Center (BU’s multicultural center). Last summer she added another title to her remarkable résumé: Miss Pakistan World.

Rupani, a native of Texas whose parents hail from Karachi, Pakistan, won the Miss Pakistan World crown and sash at a competition in Toronto, Canada, in August 2010. (“Due to the political and religious unrest in Pakistan,” she explains, “the competition is held in Canada, giving Pakistani girls living abroad a chance to compete and represent Pakistan in the international pageant world.”) She’s now preparing

to represent Pakistan in the Miss Asia Pacific World 2011 pageant to be held in Seoul, South Korea, in June.

Entering a beauty contest wasn’t something Rupani had ever considered, until as an intern with the United Nations she met

Natasha Paracha, Miss Pakistan World 2008. “I started exploring the pageant further online,” says Rupani, “and thought this could be a great platform to create more awareness about Pakistan—a country that’s often neglected.”

The pageant judges chose Rupani from a group of five finalists, and it’s easy to see why they were impressed. She’s not only a beautiful young woman, she’s also bright, poised, and articulate. The Dean’s List student is enrolled in a dual degree program in anthropology and religion, and she brings a range of life experiences to the classroom, says Assistant Professor of Religion Kecia Ali. Though Rupani is not the most outspoken student in the room, Ali says, “When she does enter the conversation, it’s invariably useful and thoughtful and interesting.”



Annie Rupani at the competition in Toronto, Canada, 2010. Photos courtesy of Miss Pakistan World



Photo by Vernon Doucette

Rupani has taken on five internships while at BU, most recently last summer working in the Washington, D.C., office of Texas congressman Ted Poe. Reflecting her commitment to public service, she participated in BU’s First-Year Student Outreach Project (a community service program for incoming students), helped run an after-school program for Boston-area Girl Scouts, and has logged hundreds of volunteer hours with the Rupani Foundation, which her father founded in 2006 to reduce poverty and promote social entrepreneurship within the mountain communities of Pakistan, Afghanistan, and surrounding countries.

Her work with the foundation has included several trips to Pakistan. In 2006, she traveled to northern Pakistan to survey women’s development centers, orphanages, and cooperatives. On another visit, she assisted in inaugurating five gem-cutting and -polishing centers the foundation helped create to provide jobs for Pakistani women.

As a sophomore, Rupani spent a semester studying in London, and this fall she kicked off her senior year with a study abroad program in Jordan, where she spent a semester soaking up the country’s religious history, exploring its “beautiful canyons,” and practicing speaking Arabic with her Jordanian host family. (Rupani is also fluent in Urdu, an official language of Pakistan.) She describes her overall experience in Jordan as “unbelievable.”

Rupani hopes to land a job after graduation with the U.S. Foreign Service. “I’d like to work in the public diplomacy sector of the Foreign Service so I can help in building bridges between the U.S. and the Muslim world,” she says. The Department of State refers to its public diplomacy officers as “cross-cultural relationship experts” and often calls on them to be America’s voice to foreign media. With her language skills and international experience—and her growing comfort in the spotlight—Rupani seems well suited to be such a liaison.



SEE MORE PHOTOS OF ANNIE RUPANI IN HER TRAVELS ABROAD AT www.bu.edu/cas/magazine/spring11.



REFLECTIONS OF A DEAN

Photos by Vernon Doucette

Just after Thanksgiving weekend—when she managed to fit in six faculty tenure reviews among the festivities at her farm in New Hampshire—Dean Virginia Sapiro sat down with *arts&sciences* to talk about her nearly four years as the Dean of the College and Graduate School of Arts & Sciences. Joining Boston University in July '07, she has made her BU journey alongside the current class of graduating seniors. With them, over nearly four years, she has found her way at BU and grown in her role as dean. A political psychologist, women's studies scholar, and member of the American Academy of Arts & Sciences, Sapiro spent more than three decades at the University of Wisconsin-Madison in teaching, research, and high-level administrative positions, most recently as Interim Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, prior to joining BU.

By Jean Hennelly Keith

Q. What are some of the things you most like about Arts & Sciences and how would you characterize its strengths?

A. I think the biggest strengths are its intellectual and academic diversity, and I don't just mean the many different departments and fields but the diversity within those. We're large and complex enough that it creates immense potential to bring people together with interests that converge. One of the things I can offer as a leader is a bird's-eye view of everything and bring people together in, for example, the life sciences, the languages, geosciences, neuroscience—very different disciplines and centers—and create even better education and research.

Something else I like most about BU is that we now have a refreshed generation of deans across the University who are not particularly territorial and really enjoy working with one another. Lots of us run in and out of each other's offices, metaphorically, seeing how our work can help one another.

Q. What are some of the skills/traits you draw on that have been most helpful in making you an effective dean?

A. Energy and curiosity. The ability and desire to be fair with and respect the people I work with. I listen to them and treat people well, even when I have to say no. And an ability to learn. In any given day, I have to be smart about art history and physics and sociology and remote sensing. If you're going to try to be smart in all those things in one day, you have to learn and learn quickly. I put in a new team of associate deans that gives me many, many more ears. I have three associates now where there was one before—one in the humanities, one in the social sciences, and one in the natural sciences.

Q. What did you set out most wanting to do, and what have you been able to accomplish? What would you say are some of the milestones of your tenure as Dean of Arts & Sciences so far?

A. I wanted to cultivate the excellence of undergrad and grad education and research and support a great faculty. We've been able to move forward in these areas. When I came here, there weren't enough procedures and policies, so people dealt with problems as they came up. I spent the first couple of years on policies and procedures and built a

new form of leadership here. Almost all of the chairs and directors are now appointed to a three-year term, which is renewable once. We are changing leadership practices to get more faculty involved. With the CAS First-Year Experience, we are really paying attention to the experience students are having within the first year here, how they get a strong footing in order to be more successful throughout their undergraduate career. Faculty and first-year undergraduates meet informally outside the context of the classroom—talk together, eat together—just so they can get to know one another. We also pay more attention to the faculty's first years here, and have put in a formal mentoring program.



Q. How has the economic downturn in recent years impacted the College?

A. The economic hardship affected us most through the worries of our students whose families were hurting and through our experiences worrying about our students. The University's first effort was to ensure that no one left BU because their family didn't have the money. Secondly, when the financial crunch came, even though gifts dropped off and it affected us, the University wasn't living off the endowment. The endowment wasn't running the core program, so I didn't have to hustle to figure out how I was going to pay my faculty. Because it was healthy, the University has been able to continue to expand the size of the faculty every year. Because we were building better relationships with alumni, they have been stepping forward and increasing donations. If you want a strong return on your philanthropic dollars, boy, can we offer you a good investment!

Q. There seems to be a revival of the humanities among colleges. What is your view of this?

A. We don't have to "revive" the humanities; we have fabulous humanities programs in both CAS and CFA—great literature, great arts. It is one of the strong specialties of BU, and CAS in particular. Some universities are cutting languages because they're too expensive, but we are expanding them. I think we have a unique role to play in supporting the languages and global studies. BU students across the University are wonderfully interested in the world. When you see 40 percent of your students doing study abroad, you know you have an interest in global studies.

Q. There are so many fields to study at CAS. How do students find guidance on how to choose?

A. We have advisors and are building our advisor force even further. A large number of our students haven't chosen a major by the time they arrive—maybe 30 percent of them—but that is typical of an arts and sciences college. They're really smart, with great backgrounds. They don't come in lost; they come in curious. They've chosen a large, urban institution because when they looked around, their hearts told them that this is where they belong. Our students grow to the music of the T.

Q. How much time do you spend traveling and visiting with alumni around the country and the world? What are you learning from them?

A. I talk to a lot of alumni who just loved their experience here and understand the impact it had on their lives. I talk to alumni who did not enjoy their experience here but know the education had a great impact on their lives. And I talk to alumni who have a lot of issues they want to deal with and tell me about. But if they meet with me, they're open to engaging and we've developed some very close relationships with those alumni. What I say to people is, "We're great now. Get on this train because it's going to great places."

Q. What's been the most gratifying about your time here at BU?

A. I get to be surrounded all the time by faculty and students who are doing amazing things. I feel that energy and want to see what we can do together. So even though this is my fourth year, my "graduation" year, I've still got more work to do and I think it will take me more than four years!



DEAN VIRGINIA SAPIRO INVITES YOU TO READ MORE ABOUT HER VISION FOR ARTS & SCIENCES AT www.bu.edu/cas/ar.

Pump Up the Vol(taire, H)ume

A phone-in show brings philosophy to the masses.

By Patrick L. Kennedy

Jack Russell Weinstein says that society no longer condemns its philosophers to drink hemlock; it just sequesters them in universities.

But by taking to the airwaves, Weinstein (GRS'96, '98) is breaking down the wall that obscures the work of academic philosophers. This is his mission as host of *Why? Philosophical Discussions About Everyday Life*, on North Dakota's Prairie Public Radio.

Guests on the live, call-in show have included Nobel Prize-winning economist Amartya Sen and influential feminist Carol Gilligan. Topics have included the morality of universal health care and the philosophy of hunting.

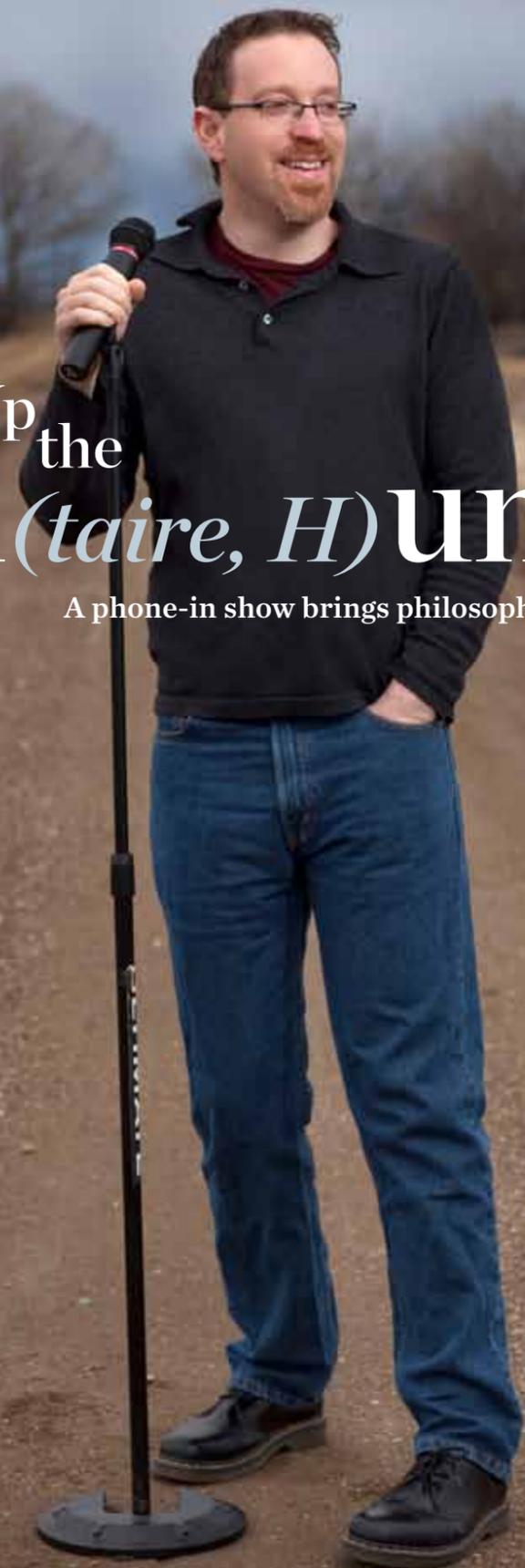


Photo by Shauna Noel Widdel (CAS'04)

An estimated 12,000 listeners across North Dakota and environs tune in for every monthly episode, while more have downloaded the podcast from whyradioshow.org. "We've gotten emailed questions from Iran, Canada, Scotland, Pakistan, Israel, and all over Europe," Weinstein says. Closer to home, fans have turned out in force for lively town hall-style broadcasts.

"I never expected this level of success and involvement," says the New York City native, who spent time after college busking in Vienna. "Not only has the general public embraced [the program], but so have professional philosophers."

Weinstein is a professional. He directs the Institute for Philosophy in Public Life at the University of North Dakota in Grand Forks, where he is a professor of philosophy. Through the radio show, fellowships, a popular film series, and other efforts, Weinstein explains, "The IPPL's explicit purpose is to bridge the gap between academic and amateur philosophers—people who dabble, who do it without credentials—and to bring both approaches into a common conversation."

That conversation may be the cure for today's rampant anti-intellectualism, says Weinstein.

"Philosophy is the study of the human place in the world. It's the way we relate to reality." You don't have to be an academic to ask yourself questions such as "What kind of father do I want to be? What kind of person do I want to be? What kind of neighbor do I want to be?"

"Obviously, there are questions about government," adds Weinstein, who as an undergrad at SUNY-Plattsburgh was an activist for public education access. "Who do you want to vote for? Who best represents you? To what extent do you have a responsibility to care for someone you're not connected to? That's one of the fundamental questions of the human experience."

Weinstein invites people to explore such questions in a thoughtful, informed manner by exposing them to the research of career thinkers, in a format suited to dialogue.

"Philosophy is a conversational dis-

cipline," says Weinstein. A ska DJ while at Plattsburgh, he adds, "And radio does dialogue much better than television. If we were doing a television show, we'd have to have graphics, special effects, lasers, cute animation—all these things to attract the viewer's eye, which distract from the idea."

Why? turns on many more ordinary folks to philosophy than a worthy but relatively obscure journal article would. "When Charles Griswold [CAS professor and former chair of philosophy] was nice enough to be one of our first guests, a lot of people wrote in asking, 'How do I find his book [*Forgiveness: A Philosophical Exploration*]? Can I get it at a regular Barnes & Noble, or do you have to be a professor to get it?'"

"Philosophy is a tremendously important discipline, because it makes your life better, more fulfilling. It brightens the colors."

Griswold was Weinstein's advisor at BU. "He's been a tremendous advocate and mentor for me since the day I walked into the University Professors Program," Weinstein says. "I wouldn't be half as successful if he hadn't taken an active interest in my postgraduation life."

At a time when the humanities struggle for respect, Weinstein makes a compelling case for the value of his field.

"First of all, you can get a job with philosophy," he says, pointing out that philosophy majors score the highest on the LSAT, for example. "If you go

into a job interview and say, 'I'm a philosopher,' employers won't be interested. But if you talk about being able to see both sides of an issue, being able to describe complicated ideas to people who wouldn't otherwise understand them, to defend any position, to take a bunch of different ideas and put them into one coherent thought, to use your imagination intellectually, to be able to write well—these are skills that businesses are starving for.

"At the same time," he adds, "not everything about education ought to be based on getting a job. You work for eight hours a day. What do you do with the other 16 hours? Don't you want to be able to understand beautiful art, delve into interesting literature, think deep thoughts, and ask questions about your place in the universe? Philosophy is a tremendously important discipline, because it makes your life better,

more fulfilling. It brightens the colors."

Weinstein, who was promoted to full professor last year at the age of 40, has a book forthcoming from Yale University Press called *Adam Smith's Pluralism: Rationality, Education, and the Moral Sentiments*. "It's investigating notions of justice," he says, "and an alternative interpretation of Smith, rather than the libertarian, conservative understanding."

In the meantime, the devoted father and husband (his wife is an English professor "on the same campus, in the same building") continues to teach, bring philosophy fellows to UND for public lectures, and host packed screenings and discussions of movies ranging from *Casablanca* to *Slap Shot*. And of course, he continues to broadcast *Why?* at 5 p.m. Central Time on the second Sunday of every month. Furthermore, he hopes to bring the program to a national radio audience through syndication. And why not?

"North Dakota exports a philosophy show and *The Thomas Jefferson Hour*," Weinstein points out. "Cambridge, Massachusetts, exports *Car Talk*. Everything is backwards!"

PHILOSOPHICALLY SPEAKING

It should come as no surprise that a graduate of Boston University's philosophy doctoral program is spearheading an exciting effort to boost the public profile of philosophy. The department is one of several at BU to earn high marks recently from the National Research Council for faculty research productivity and other criteria. "Charles Griswold's book *Forgiveness: A Philosophical Exploration*, published three years ago, continues to be the centerpiece of conferences across the globe," philosophy chair Daniel Dahlstrom told *BU Today*. He added that in 2009, Tian Yu Cao, CAS associate professor of philosophy, delivered the opening keynote address at the First International Symposium on Structural Realism and the Philosophy of Quantum Physics.

Philosophy, physics, psychology, and many other CAS/GRS programs have received high ratings from the National Research Council.

Read more at www.bu.edu/today/node/11584.



LISTEN TO JACK RUSSELL WEINSTEIN'S CALL-IN PHILOSOPHY SHOW AT www.whyradioshow.org.

Tolerate?
How
thy
neighbor.

For thousands of years, we've engaged in religious strife. It's time to stop believing we can all live in harmony and try something different.

By Andrew Thurston

“What I've learned is that when I say, ‘We're the same,’ I mean, ‘You're like me,’ not, ‘I'm like you.’”

Adam Seligman



Forget the pretense of religious harmony. Since we all have to live together, tolerating one another is the best we've got.

Professor of Religion Adam Seligman thinks pluralism has had its day, so he's aiming for something more realistic. He's trying to see if we all can just get along, despite our religious differences.

Seligman is the founder of the annual International Summer School on Religion and Public Life. Since 2003, it's brought together people of different countries and faiths (and those with none) for two weeks to explore issues of religion and tolerance in modern societies.

A Contentious World

Nestled in the rolling green hills of southern Bosnia-Herzegovina, the quiet town of Stolac was once a tourist hot spot. Then, in the early 1990s, it became a battleground. With the former Yugoslavia tearing itself apart along ethnic and religious lines, the town's Croats herded their Bosnian-Muslim neighbors into concentration camps—the lucky ones fled or were driven out of their homes. Stolac's famed Ottoman-era mosques were razed to the ground.

The mosques have since slowly been rebuilt, but neighborly relations haven't. In 2008, the Institute for War & Peace Reporting told of profound divisions between Bosniaks and Croats, with the town splintered by separate medical centers and school lessons. Decades on, religious harmony and ethnic acceptance are still elusive.

Stolac's is the kind of predicament that Seligman hopes to help solve—or prevent from recurring elsewhere. In 2003, he chose the town for his summer school. It's not the only contentious spot he's selected. Each year, the school is held in a new location—Israel, Cyprus, and England have all featured—while classrooms have included abandoned Palestinian homes and gay-friendly churches. “It's experiential,” says Seligman, “It's lived, not just read, not just discussed.”

This is more of a two-week laboratory than a conventional school, mixing site visits, lectures, and small group discussions. Attendees—Seligman calls them fellows—are not necessarily scholars (community activist, priest, and police officer are the more likely professions), and they journey from across the globe, hailing from everywhere: Belarus, Indonesia, Uganda. If this disparate bunch, with its sometimes warring religious differences, can learn to get along for two weeks, maybe the people of Stolac or the Middle East can too.

We're Not All the Same

The problem with most attempts at promoting interfaith and interethnic unity, says Seligman, is that they start from the wrong point. The first step shouldn't be that “At the bottom, we're the same,” but that “Where we want to be recognized is in our specialness.” Seligman's idea is to begin with our differences—the sticky, difficult bits we tend to avoid.

“What I've learned is that when I say, ‘We're the same,’ I mean, ‘You're like me,’ not, ‘I'm like you,’” he says.



In the Yugoslav war of the early 1990s, the Ottoman-era mosques of Stolac, Bosnia-Herzegovina, were largely destroyed. By 2003, when the International Summer School on Religion and Public Life visited, they were being rebuilt under the protection of a NATO-led force (left). Adam Seligman describes the school as “experiential”—the 2005 cohort (center) toured the contested Temple Mount (known to Muslims as the Noble Sanctuary), Jerusalem. In 2010, the school’s attendees met with Sheikh Nazim Al-Haqqani of Lefke, in northern Cyprus—the island’s sovereignty is disputed by Greece and Turkey.

“The fact that something makes me uncomfortable is not a reason to reject it or vilify it.”

— Adam Seligman



Photos courtesy of International Summer School on Religion and Public Life archives

“One of the things we’re trying to explore with this school is, can you bring your differences to the public realm and can everybody deal with that, instead of gently walking around them—all the time celebrating difference, but really privatizing it, shunting it off?”

A sociologist by training, Seligman claims the West has pushed religion to the sidelines, pluralizing or secularizing society in an attempt to hold diverse peoples together. If we have religious beliefs or other views and lifestyles that differ from the norm, we’re encouraged to keep those private—our faith should have nothing to do with our work on a school board or in running a youth group, for instance. Seligman, who is Jewish, thinks that’s just asking for trouble. He contends that our religious identities aren’t going anywhere and that it’s time to leverage the resources they offer for conflict resolution. According to Chair of Anthropology Rob Weller, putting faith so firmly in the public sphere is an unusual stance.

Since the Enlightenment movement of the eighteenth century, says Weller, the common take on religious harmony has been that “We’re all autonomous individuals and we interact with each other on those grounds; any other loyalties, communal loyalties, that we have, say as Serbs or Jews, are private.”

He says that Seligman calls that long-accepted utopia into question: “The Enlightenment thing, it sounds nice, but it’s not working on the ground,” adds Weller as he sums up Seligman’s approach. “We continue to have all these problems with communal identities after hundreds of years of this way of thinking.”

A Bipolar City

With an influx of immigrants from the south and east, communal identities are a hot topic in much of Europe. Seligman has twice taken the school to England’s second city, the cultural melting pot—cauldron might be better—of Birmingham. By 2024, it’s expected to become a “plural” city, with no majority ethnic group; as of the 2001 census, around 15 percent of the population identified itself as Muslim. “There are huge tensions between the communities,” says Seligman. “Everybody is afraid of the next bomb threat.”

Resentment and fear stalk the city, sharpening religious and ethnic divides. A national newspaper recently exposed a project to monitor majority-Muslim neighborhoods with more than 200 surveillance cameras. When youth fear arrest because of their faith or politicians question the building of a new mosque, it’s hard to keep religious identity locked up indoors.

“There are people who recognize the tensions, recognize the potential for deep disturbance, and are trying to preempt it,” says Seligman. “That’s where I think we can be most effective.”

One of those seeing Birmingham’s uneasiness up close is Toby Howarth. The newly appointed Secretary for Inter Religious Affairs for the Church of England and a local vicar has twice helped organize the summer school. As Birmingham becomes “a kind of bipolar city, ethnically,” he says it causes real “concern in terms of community cohesion, in terms of getting communities to engage with each other.”

He signed up for the school after becoming tired of interfaith events where “We begin with our similarities, then we have a couple of samosas and tea, and not a lot comes out of it.” Working in a city populated by groups with “very different outlooks on life,” he likes that Seligman encourages people to look at the “edgy areas” of difference.

“I wouldn’t say it’s about emphasizing the differences; it’s about starting with them,” says Howarth, who hopes to establish a permanent sister summer school in Birmingham. With all the potential pitfalls out in the open, he thinks interfaith partnerships have a more solid foundation: “Then it’s about saying, ‘How do we build little steps toward a shared understanding?’”

In Birmingham, that could mean religious groups coming together for common secular goals, such as lobbying politicians for improved housing, supporting fundraising drives for disaster relief, and cleaning up local parks.

Suffering Your Own Discomfort

Seligman says the summer school has inspired lots of little steps: Jewish and Arab educators have launched joint programs; monthly community dinners have sprung up in Texas; and Evangelical Christians have expressed more tolerance toward homosexuals. He adds that those Evangelicals may not have “changed their idea about homosexuality,” but, in a way, that’s not the point. This, remember, isn’t about harmony, but tolerance—bearing the unbearable—while preserving the school’s other mission to maintain a “commitment to tradition and religious identity.”

“The fact that something makes me uncomfortable is not a reason to reject it or vilify it,” says Seligman. So, while tolerance originally referred to groups of people “whom you’d want to get rid of, but you have to suffer their presence”—in Canon Law, Seligman adds, that meant Jews and prostitutes—he wants to “turn it into suffering, being able to live with your own discomfort.”

He’s not exempt from that. Seligman has found himself plunged into the middle of unity services with a decidedly Eucharistic flavor and group discussions with fervent anti-Zionists. For him, that’s what it’s all about. He started the school after worrying that his academic work was too abstract to “change much,” was “too far removed from real people doing real things.”

But the world outside academia, with its mixed-up towns like Stolac and Birmingham, is a messy place. Surely encouraging us all to live together peacefully can seem like a fruitless mission?

“I couldn’t say it’s a thankless task,” says Seligman. “Is it at the boundaries of a really deep, overwhelming problem? Yes. Are we working at something we will find a solution to? No. This is the work of generations.”

If you want to play your part, Seligman suggests you have a meal with somebody outside your community: “It’s a start,” he says. And if you don’t agree on everything, don’t worry. Just deal with it.



Material Girl

By Annie Laurie Sánchez



Jodi Colella in her new Somerville studio with Undercurrent, her outsize 2008 work in window screen and steel wire.

Inset images, top to bottom: Seeds, felted wool, 2008; Seeds detail; One Day, plastic newspaper sleeves transformed into “plam,” ongoing; the crocheted center of One Day; a plam tendril close-up.

Photo of Jodi Colella by Melody Komyerov
Inset photos courtesy of Jodi Colella

Humans are tactile beings. Our fingers seem to be drawn to materials, be they smooth as silk or rough as bark. Jodi Colella’s fingers have a restless curiosity, not content to let the transformative potential of materials they touch lie dormant. A Somerville-based fiber artist who’s as fascinated by her process as she is by its outcome, Colella (CAS’81) sees the bizarre and enticing capabilities of the substances she works with. “I’m very curious about materials,” she says. “Just playing with them to find their qualities. Usually they do unexpected things.”

Her inquisitiveness comes in part from a love of nature’s building blocks. “Aesthetically, I have always loved cellular forms. In fact, if you look at my notebooks from back then,” she laughs, referring to her days studying biology at BU, “I didn’t write too much information, but I had all the images.” *Seeds* is a recent work of Colella’s that evokes biological forms but is rooted in textile traditions too. She experimented with needle felting (a method of transforming wool fleece into felt), creating dysmorphic orbs of burred fuzziness and vivid layers of color. The process signified concentrated potential, each needle prick a compacting of Colella’s own energy into the “seed.”

Colella first encountered traditional textile methods like felting and knitting during summers at her grandparents’ home on Cape Cod. “I was brought up always working with my hands,” notes the former graphic designer, “and I’ve always loved doing that. So I think that’s where I start, and then hopefully it goes somewhere else.” While fleece is a conventional material, Colella’s fingers often reach for things that stretch the definition of fiber, such as window screen that she’s used to make *Undercurrent*, a work about barriers and duplicity.

In *One Day*, an ongoing project that won awards in 2010 from the Fiber Arts Network at Eastern Michigan University

and the Textile Center in Minneapolis, she enacts her transformative play with plastic newspaper delivery sleeves. In cutting them, pulling them apart, shredding them, and spinning them into plastic yarn—“plarn”—she discovered their capacity to take on new properties, different densities, a metallic sheen. “I also became intrigued by the idea that I was collecting daily,” she reflects. “It was a comment on the passage of time. And as time went on, it grew into something else.”

She needed such a quantity of bags that she asked friends, neighbors, and students to pitch in. They did, with gusto. “Every time I would see people, before they even said hi, they’d stuff a bunch of bags in my hand,” Colella recounts. Her collectors were amazed to notice the bags’ various colors and qualities when compressed or stretched. “That’s the surprise of this project, that level of depth, that all of a sudden I was opening other peoples’ eyes to material.”

Not that Colella is a stranger to opening eyes. As a teacher at the deCordova School in Lincoln, Massachusetts, she helps students develop their art, from fiber to sculptural jewelry. Patience, she says, is the key. “It’s very difficult to be in the position of trying to figure something out but you can’t. And to have somebody show you, or indicate a way that you can figure it out yourself that makes you feel good is really important. There’s just a level of fulfillment there in people sharing with you, you sharing with people.” It’s easy to imagine a student of Colella’s catching her fervor for experimenting with materials. “Very often,” she says, eyes twinkling, “you get these surprises that are nothing you would ever dream of. That’s what I love about it.”



EXPLORE MORE OF JODI COLELLA’S WORK AND FIND OUT WHERE IT’S ON VIEW AT www.jodicolella.com.

THE BOOTBLACK, THE PRESIDENT, AND THE LAWYER

By Jeffrey L. Cruikshank



Photos courtesy of Chester Parasco Jr.

Home from the war, Chester Parasco with his father, Eleftherios, wife, Loretta, and mother, Anastasia, at the Parascos' home in Saugus, Massachusetts.

The ambition of an immigrant's son and the vote of confidence of a BU president lead to an American success story—and an endowed scholarship.

Early every morning throughout the 1920s and 1930s, Eleftherios Parasco boarded the trolley in Saugus and headed off to his job at the Lenox Hotel in Boston. Always, he was dressed immaculately: three-piece suit, watch on a gold chain, stickpin in his tie, spats, and—depending on the season and the fashion—a bowler or boater.

Eleftherios took pride in his work. He shined shoes and dispensed towels at the Lenox, back in the day when that hotel was favored by traveling salesmen, who descended on the hotel in large numbers from the Back Bay train station. Savvy salesmen knew that Eleftherios could put his hands on a pint in those Prohibition days, and he was a popular figure in the parched Back Bay.

Also in the Back Bay at that time were Boston University's central administrative offices and the College of Liberal Arts (today's College of Arts & Sciences), located in a formidable building at 688 Boylston Street, where the Boston Public Library's annex now stands. And one of Eleftherios's regular shoeshine customers was BU President Daniel Marsh (STH'08, Hon.'53).

Eleftherios and his wife, Anastasia, were Greek immigrants: he from Smyrna, and she from Sparta. They arrived in the United States separately during the 'teens and were married almost immediately—a hint that the marriage had been arranged in the Old Country. Eleftherios found work, and the couple bought a modest house in Saugus and began a family. The oldest of their three children, Chester, was born in 1918.

Chester (CAS'47, LAW'47) was a smart and handsome boy who, like his father, had ambitions. Aiming to attend a prestigious Ivy League school, he enrolled for a year of postsecondary study at Kents Hill Preparatory School in Maine. He paid for that extra year of high school himself, with money he had saved doing odd jobs. His plan worked: while at Kents Hill, he

was accepted to Princeton.

Then Eleftherios stepped in. He had never heard of this place "Princeton," and he certainly wasn't going to pay to have Chester go to school there.

Eleftherios insisted that Chester enroll at the local alternative—Boston University—and his reluctant son agreed. Then Eleftherios dropped the other shoe: He wasn't much inclined to pay for BU, either.

Despite waiting tables and working other part-time jobs, Chester could not pay his tuition bill and couldn't enroll for his next semester. Eleftherios shrugged off his son's request for financial help. "You have troubles?" he asked. "Go see the president—a friend to me."

Which is how Chester Parasco arrived at Daniel Marsh's office, sometime in the late 1930s. A secretary told him that he would have to make an appointment; Chester strode past her, pushed open Marsh's door, and introduced himself to the startled president. "My name is Chester Parasco," he said in his booming voice. "My father shines your shoes." Marsh heard him out, and then reached for a notepad. "Let this man move ahead," he wrote. Chester's BU education continued.

When World War II broke out, Chester left school, enrolled in the Army, earned the rank of corporal, and (according



Chester Parasco Jr. holding a sketch of his father, Chester Sr.

to family lore) was the first American to hit the first beach—at Salerno—in the Allied effort to retake mainland Europe. He subsequently received the Bronze Star for heroism.

After the war, Chester made up for lost time. Even before completing his undergraduate degree, he enrolled at BU's law school. He and a former classmate, Loretta Lynch—who earned her CLA degree in 1941—were married. At the 1947 Commencement, Chester received both his CLA and LAW degrees, and soon took a job with the legal department of an insurance company. The Parascos and their newborn son, Chester Jr., moved from veterans housing in Charlestown to a modest tract house in Walpole. After several years, Chester set up a law practice in downtown Boston with a friend—first called Parasco and Levy (today's Parasco Worthington & Chase). From his office at 53 State Street, he became associated with State House lobbyists and politicians, building a lucrative practice. "No one could work a room like my father," recalls Chester Jr. with a smile. "Nobody."

In 1963, Chester Sr. became assistant legal counsel to Massachusetts Governor Endicott Peabody. Increasingly, he turned his attention to politics and public service on the local level. He also stayed in touch with BU, attending the occasional reunion and—with his wife—making a series of small gifts to the University.

Loretta died in 1993, and Chester followed in August 2009. In his will, he included a bequest of \$150,000 to establish and endow the Chester and Loretta Parasco Scholarship Fund, to support students selected by the dean of the College of Arts & Sciences. The only proviso, according to the terms of the will, is that the selected students demonstrate both financial need and academic merit—conditions that Chester himself surely met, on that long-ago day in the office of President Marsh.

This article first appeared in *Bostonia*.

First Responder

By Jeremy Schwab

During the first week of April 2009, the commander of Navy Medicine West, based in San Diego, California, received a troubling message from the local Navy Research Laboratory. The lab had analyzed a mucus sample from a 9-year-old girl with flu symptoms and discovered a strain of the virus that was previously unknown. Two weeks later, the country learned to fear the “swine flu,” or H1N1 influenza virus. Fortunately, the commander had previously led the development of Navy Medicine’s pandemic flu response plan, and so her team was able to quickly recognize the severity of the threat and notify the Centers for Disease Control. The commander’s name was Christine Hunter (CAS’80, MED’80).

Nearly five years earlier, on the day after Christmas, 2004, a magnitude 9.3 earthquake struck off the coast of Sumatra, Indonesia. Soon afterward, the chief of staff at the Navy’s Bureau of Medicine and Surgery in Washington, D.C., received a call from the Naval Operations Center informing her that the resulting tsunami had killed tens—and perhaps hundreds—of thousands of people in coastal areas across the Indian Ocean (the death toll would eventually exceed 230,000). The Navy would need to devise a response immediately. The chief of staff’s name was Christine Hunter.

So how did Hunter, a graduate of BU’s accelerated six-year BA/MD program, wind up playing a key role in responding to two of the biggest international medical crises of the past decade?

Back on campus to receive a Distinguished Alumni Award during Alumni Weekend last October, Hunter, now a rear admiral, has a knack for channeling all of her sizeable talents into the work at hand—a trait that has steadily earned her promotions to positions of greater and greater responsibility within the Navy. Everywhere she goes, it seems, she improves the way that things are done.

Hunter’s Navy résumé reveals the many ways she has transformed medical care and increased access to it for military personnel—young and old, families and retirees, and those wounded in battle. During the mid-1990s, while medical services director at the Naval Medical Center San Diego, she revamped primary care ser-

vices and created a plan to enable seniors to supplement their Medicare with TRICARE, the health insurance plan for service members. In the early 2000s, at the Naval Hospital Bremerton in Washington State, Dr. Hunter turned her attention to improving patient access for families by overseeing the addition of a new Family Care Center. Her next chapter was at sea, caring for wounded military personnel. As Pacific Fleet Surgeon, in 2003–2004 she pioneered new surgical techniques aboard small combatant ships—these were adopted as the prototype for the

“When I got to BU, I think the most important thing that I learned was critical thinking.”



Rear Admiral Christine Hunter receives a Distinguished Alumni Award from President of the BU Alumni Association Dave Hollowell (ENG’69, ’72; GSM’74), at an awards ceremony last October.

Photo (above) by Vernon Doucette

Photo (left) by Matt Kalinowski for BU Photography

Expeditionary Resuscitative Surgical System used today. When she returned to the Naval Medical Center San Diego in 2007, she continued her focus on the wounded, developing highly acclaimed medical programs for amputee care, combat stress control, and traumatic brain injury. Today, Rear Admiral Hunter coordinates health care for 9.6 million beneficiaries around the globe as director of the TRICARE Management Activity.

In part, Hunter attributes her readiness to handle any new situation to her CAS training. “When I got to BU, I think the most important thing that I learned was critical

thinking,” she says. “As I look back on it, that’s often what I bring to the situation. I don’t bring the deepest subject-matter expertise in pandemic flu or in tsunamis or in running a hospital or running a health plan, but I bring a way to integrate the skills of the organization so that we can all move forward together.”

Probably the biggest crisis she ever faced was the tsunami aftermath. During that tragic 2004 holiday season, Hunter and her colleagues quickly put together a novel plan to augment the staffing of Navy hospital ships with onboard nongovernmental aid agencies. Normally, such collaboration between the Navy and NGOs would have taken a year of planning, but, given the dire circumstances, they cut through the red tape and launched a ship within days. The collaboration was so successful that it became a model for future disaster responses, including the one following last year’s devastating earthquake in Haiti.

Hunter’s brief visit to BU in the fall mirrored typical days in her professional life. She spent her time taking in new data, holding deep discussions with others in her field, and letting these inputs spark new ideas. In the morning, she participated in meetings on post-traumatic stress and chronic traumatic encephalopathy research, where she gained some new insight into how the Military Health System could tackle the problem of suicide by looking more closely at service members with a history of concussions.

“I got very excited in the conversations we were having,” she said during an interview following a symposium. “Maybe we need to look at autopsy data in service members who committed suicide to try to see if we can identify neuroanatomical brain changes similar to those seen in athletes with repeated concussions. Somewhere in there is going to be an overlap group where maybe there was a subclinical concussion or more than one, and that helped that threshold to be breached for suicide.”

Characteristically, there was no leisurely ending to her day’s activities, no sense that now, with this latest award, Hunter could rest on her laurels. There was just her excitement about how she could apply what she had learned during the day to what she would do the next day.

Good Times and High Honors

ARTS & SCIENCES ALUMS REUNITE AND PAY TRIBUTE TO AWARD WINNERS

Alumni from all over the world gathered for Boston University's Reunion and Alumni Weekend, October 29–31. It was a chance for CAS and GRS alums to reconnect with classmates and faculty members, have fun, and engage with new ideas. The events ranged from the festive (a Halloween-themed Oktoberfest Terrier Tailgate before the men's winning hockey game against UMass Lowell) to the thought-provoking (a talk on the role of religion in U.S. public policy by CAS professors Andrew Bacevich and Stephen Prothero). Christine Hunter (CAS'80, MED'80) received a Boston University Distinguished Alumni Award (see story on page 20). On Friday, a dinner was held in honor of this year's CAS Distinguished Alumni Award Winners, whose outstanding contributions to their professions, communities, and Alma Mater reflect the strength and excellence of the Boston University liberal arts education. And the winners were:



Katherine French, GRS'81

Katherine French has been director of the Danforth Museum of Art and Museum School since 2005. Under her leadership, the museum was named Outstanding Cultural Organization for 2008 by the Massachusetts Arts Education Collaborative. She was named Best Curator of Locally Made Art at the 2010 Boston Art Awards. Prior to her tenure at the Danforth Museum of Art, she was gallery director at the Montserrat College of Art from 2002 to 2005 and gallery director for Boston University's 808 and Sherman Galleries from 1996 to 2002, organizing numerous alumni exhibitions.



Noreen Grice, CAS'85

Noreen Grice is founder and president of You Can Do Astronomy LLC, an accessibility design and consulting company with a focus on making astronomy and space science accessible to people with disabilities. She has taught astronomy at Bentley College, Northeastern University, and San Diego State University. The author of numerous books, several in collaboration with NASA, the National Braille Press, and the Museum of Science, Grice has written *Touch the Stars* in Braille, which enables blind children to visualize the constellations. She has received numerous awards for her groundbreaking work.

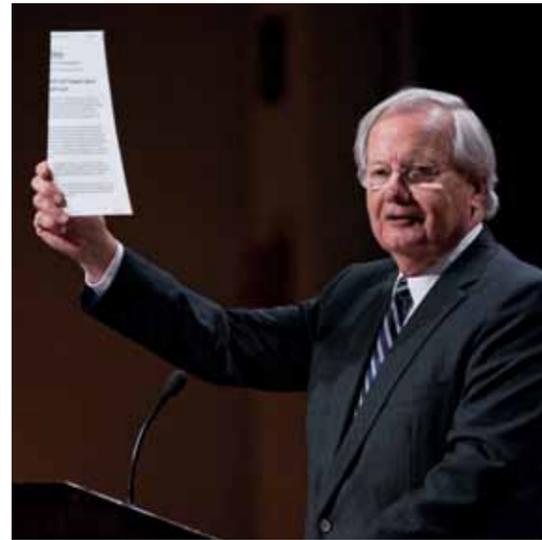


Carole A. Heilman, CAS'72

Carole Heilman is director of the Division of Microbiology and Infectious Diseases (DMID) of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, a component of the National Institutes of Health. She has led the DMID in improving responses to public health challenges like 2009's outbreak of H1N1, for which she spearheaded clinical vaccine trials. The DMID's research portfolio under Heilman includes some 300 organisms, many related to public health concerns, such as influenza, tuberculosis, meningitis, pneumonia, and even rabies. Heilman's efforts to generate AIDS vaccines, accelerate biodefense research, and develop acellular vaccines for pertussis (whooping cough) have earned her three Awards for Distinguished Service from the U.S. Secretary of Health & Human Services.

—Jeremy Schwab. Annie Laurie Sánchez contributed to the Heilman article.

Photos by Vernon Doucette



Pioneering broadcast journalist Bill Moyers delivered the third Howard Zinn Lecture on October 29 during Alumni Weekend. It was the first lecture in the annual series following the death in January 2010 of the political activist and author who taught in the College of Arts & Sciences political science department for 24 years. Moyers has been executive editor of public television's *Bill Moyers Journal*, senior news analyst for *CBS Evening News*, and chief correspondent for the documentary series *CBS Reports*. His lecture warned of the dangers posed over the last few decades by the consolidation of wealth in the hands of the privileged few—whom he dubbed “plutonists.”

See and hear the Howard Zinn Memorial Lecture by Bill Moyers at www.bu.edu/cas/magazine/spring11/moyers.

College and Graduate School of Arts & Sciences Distinguished Alumni Awards

Each year, the College and Graduate School of Arts & Sciences celebrate our alumni who have distinguished themselves in service to the community, their profession, or Alma Mater. If you would like to know more about the alumni awards nominating process, please email casalum@bu.edu or call 617-353-1060.

Norman Rozeff (CAS'55) of Harlingen, Tex., has been recognized with a tile in the Walk of Fame that honors the most influential citizens in the 100-year history of the city, as it commemorates its centennial. He has demonstrated “Service Above Self” and received appreciation for documenting city and regional history.

Joseph C. Evers (GRS'62) retired in September 2009 after serving 65 years as pastor. He lives with his wife, Karen, in Des Moines, Iowa. His youngest son is a second-career pastor nearby.

Rev. Bob MacFarlane (CAS'68) of Mt. Pleasant, S.C., recently retired after 40 years of ordained ministry in the United Church of Christ, serving in Michigan, Pennsylvania, and Massachusetts. He just concluded consulting as an interim minister at Scottsdale UCC, Ariz., and is now interim at Circular Church in Charleston, S.C. Bob and Diana have two grown children, Duncan (North Carolina) and Andrew (Pennsylvania). Email Bob at revbobmac@aol.com.

Claire Elaine Shapiro Soja (CAS'68) of Littleton, Mass., has been named to the Board of Directors of Detwiler Fenton Investment Management, LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Detwiler Fenton & Co., Boston, where she also serves as managing director/portfolio manager.

George Fulginiti-Shakar (CAS'69) was music director and conductor for the inaugural production in the newly rebuilt Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theatre in Washington, D.C. The show, *Oklahoma*, ran from October 23 to December 31, 2010. This is George's 14th musical production at Arena Stage, where he is also an affiliated artist. Contact him at geofulshak@aol.com.

Frank L. Politano (CAS'71) of Berkeley Heights, N.J., is the inventor of a Consumption Investment System claimed in recently issued U.S. Patent No. 7,792,740.

Maureen Sullivan Romagnoli (CAS'73) wrote and published two books, *Trail Magic: Lost in Crawford Notch* and *The Sullivan Saga: Memories of an Overseas Childhood*. *Trail Magic* tells the story of teenager Angie Jackson, whose family runs a campground in rugged Crawford Notch in New Hampshire's White Mountains. They must find four-year-old Melanie, who is lost in the surrounding wilderness. In a strange

twist of fate, she gets help from the past. *The Sullivan Saga* is a collection of exotic, funny, and sometimes bitter-sweet stories of an overseas childhood in Asia and Africa from 1957 to 1972.

Abbe Rolnick (CAS'74) recently published her first novel, *River of Angels*. Set on a tropical island, the story explores people caught between what society accepts and each individual's true self. Through the lives of a prostitute, a healer, an entrepreneur, a beggar, and two elders, the reader reflects on the intricacies of human nature. For more on what Abbe is up to, check out www.abberolnick.com. She can be reached at abber@nas.com.

Ron Rapice (CAS'77, MET'79) was the recipient of the 2010 Theodore and Margaret Beard Excellence in Teaching Award, presented by the Fairfield County Community Foundation. The award acknowledges outstanding educational instructors in the Bridgeport public schools. Recipients of this award are recognized by their peers, students, and the community as vital to the growth and continued development of education in Bridgeport. The winner of the 2010 Beard Excellence in Teaching Award received a cash award of \$25,000. Contact him at rrapice@bridgeportedu.net.

Lori (Buzzell) Dougherty (CAS'80) has joined Dana-Farber Cancer Institute and the Jimmy Fund as director of development marketing. She had previously served Boston University for 11 years, most recently as executive director of client services for Marketing & Communications.

John Coll (CAS'81) is currently employed at CN*MRI, Dover, Del., as a medical director of the Sleep Disorders Center and staff neurologist. His son, Randall J. Coll, is currently enrolled at BU's College of Communication in the MFA Film Production program. Reach John at jbcoll@comcast.net.

Jim Wood (CAS'81) is delighted to announce the publication of his first book, *From Ramen to Riches: Building Wealth in Your 20s*. It aims to help financially clueless 20-somethings get a grip on managing their money.

Jan Schwartz (CAS'84), now the director of development at the MetroWest Jewish Day School in Framingham, Mass., has a newfound respect for what it takes to run a school. As a fundraiser, being in the

world of your constituency makes the mission that much more real and dynamic. He would love to hear from classmates.

Robert B. Dimmick (CAS'86) was elected president of the Interlochen Alumni Organization in April 2010. As president, he will be working with the administration and trustees of Interlochen Center for the Arts on the 50th anniversary of Interlochen Arts Academy in 2012. This will include an all-alumni reunion over Memorial Day weekend, 2012. Robert still writes on etiquette at etiquetteer.com.

Margaret M. Duggan, MD, FACTS (CAS'86, MED'90) was recently named president of the medical staff at Faulkner Hospital. Duggan has been medical director of the Faulkner Breast Center since 2005 and is a member of the department of surgical oncology at Brigham and Women's Hospital, as well as being on staff at the Women's Cancer Program at Dana-Farber Cancer Institute. As president of the medical staff, she will assume a new leadership role in the Brigham and Women's/Faulkner organization while continuing

with a busy clinical practice in breast surgery.

Mike Arsenault (CAS'92) recently developed and launched an answer for diaper rash. It is the sixth product from Emily Skin Soothers, Inc.—a company he created after his daughter Emily was born with eczema. He used his training as an acupuncturist and herbalist to make something for her, and the rest is history. His products are sold in health food stores, acupuncture offices, and Whole Foods stores. Check out the products, and get in touch at www.emilyskinsoothers.com.

Alexandra Lei Chan (CAS'93) and Jack Harvey Katz of Pound Ridge and Westhampton Beach, N.Y., were married on December 18, 2010. The bride received her Doctor of Dental Surgery from New York University Dental School and completed her postdoctoral studies at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine and Montefiore Medical Center in 1999. In 2004, she received her Master of Public Health at Columbia University in Health Policy and Management in New York City. Chan is the vice president of dental services and

LIVE SUSTAINABLY.

It's a simple mantra, BUT THE
IMPLICATIONS ARE INFINITELY COMPLEX.

Join faculty experts and fellow alumni for a weekend of
exploring your role in the bigger picture: Earth.

SUSTAINABILITY
IN THE CITY
JUNE 10–12, 2011 

BU ALUMNI COLLEGE is an immersive
educational experience with on-campus residential
options, led by the COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES.

WWW.BU.EDU/ALUMNICOLLEGE

Boston University Alumni Association

the interim medical director for administrative services in Hartford, Conn.

Brian Ettinger (CAS'94) graduated with a master's degree in marine biology from Nova Southeastern University. His studies concentrated on the reef fish and reef-associated fish off Broward County, Florida. He worked as a research associate and scientific diver for the National Coral Reef Institute for several years. Currently he is working as a career firefighter/paramedic/scuba Instructor with the City of Hollywood Fire Rescue and Beach Safety Department. He also works as a scientific diver and field research technician for the Physical Oceanography Lab and Nova Southeastern University Oceanographic Center in Dania Beach, Fla. Contact him at ettinger@nova.edu.

Christy (Cullen) Williams (CAS'95, SED'96) and her husband, Mark Williams, announce the birth of their first child, Kaylee Elizabeth, on October 7, 2010. Contact Christy at clcul@aol.com.

Michelle (Digilio) O'Connell (CAS'96) married John O'Connell on March 24, 2009, in Las Vegas, Nev. On February 2, 2010, their daughter Sarah Marie O'Connell was born. She joined big brothers Chris, Andrew, Patrick, and Peter, and big sisters Amanda and Elizabeth. The couple lives in Mooresville, N.C., with their children. Contact Michelle at jmconnell8@aol.com.

Sherley E. Cruz (CAS'99, LAW'03) is leaving Greater Boston Legal Services' Employment Law Unit to join the Massachusetts Attorney General's Office Fair Labor Division as its community outreach coordinator. She was also elected co-president of the Massachusetts Association of Hispanic Attorneys. Reach Sherley at cruzsherley@yahoo.com.

Roger House (GRS'99), assistant professor in American Studies at Emerson College in Boston, recently published a book on the legendary Chicago bluesman Big Bill Broonzy, *Blue Smoke: the Recorded Journey of Big Bill Broonzy*. It is featured on the website www.bluesmokestory.com and is available on Amazon.com.

Grant Silver (CAS'99) recently joined the asset management division of BioMed Realty in Cambridge. The company focuses on providing real estate

to the life science industry, with over 11 million square feet of office and laboratory space under management.

Jeanne (Lucas) Ciccone (CAS'03) and her husband, Marco, announce the birth of their first child, Thomas Giovanni, on April 19, 2010.

Christine (Knoblauch) Hall (CAS'03) married Christopher Hall, both of Glendale, Calif., on September 25, 2010, at Marsh Chapel. **Stephanie Koutrakos (COM'03)** was maid of honor. Christine is a research associate at City of Hope, and Chris is a field producer with E! Entertainment. Friends can email Christine at christineannehall@gmail.com.

Nathaniel Ulrich (CAS'03) married Kristyn Brezinsky on July 10, 2010, in New Orleans, La. **Richard Peterson (CAS'05)**, **Brandon Cook (CAS'05)**, **Stanley Kam (CAS'05)**, **Andrew Delker (SMG'07)**, and **Geoff Fisher (CAS'06)** attended the ceremony. The couple plans to move to Boston.

Rachael (Petro) Wojtovich (CAS'05, GRS'05) and **Andrew Wojtovich (CAS'05, GRS'05)** are happy to announce the birth of their second son, Bennett Rhys Wojtovich, on August 3, 2010. He was welcomed with love by big brother Jackson, two years old.

Deepa Natarajan (CAS'06) was married to Gautam Ganesan on June 20, 2010, in Berkeley, Calif. In attendance at the wedding were **Olivia Dunn (COM'06)**, **Talia Frenkel (CAS'06)**, **Imogen Lee (CAS'06)**, **Kira Klapper (COM'06)**, **Valentina Gallup (CAS'08)**, **Amber Held (UNI'06)**, **Bonnie Steyer (SED'06, '09)**, **Rachel Gaddes (SAR'06, SPH'08)**, **Maria Daskalopolous (CAS'05)**, and **Nicholas Kretz (CAS'05)**. Deepa has worked at the UC Botanical Garden in Berkeley since graduation. The couple went to Bali for their honeymoon and will then go to South India where they will spend six months in Chennai. Contact her at natarajan.dp@gmail.com.

Desiree Garcia (GRS'07, '08) is a film scholar and assistant professor at Arizona State University in Transborder Studies, but she also stars in *Guy and Madeline on a Park Bench*, a film that is winning awards all over the country. The film's New York City premiere was very successful, with positive reviews in *The New York Times*, *The Village Voice*, and on NPR.



Bassam Z. Shakhshiri (CAS'60), chemistry professor and first-ever William T. Evjue Distinguished Chair for the Wisconsin Idea at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, has been named 2011 President-Elect of the American Chemical Society. Shakhshiri has lectured and presented all over the world and he has been featured in *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *Newsweek*, *Time*, and on CNN, as well as many other national and international publications and shows. For his work in the field of chemistry, he has received numerous accolades, including the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) Award for Public Understanding of Science and Technology, the National Science Board Public Service Award, and the Emerson Science Advocacy Medal for "distinguished, sustained, and lasting contributions in the development of the sciences."

Photo courtesy of Bassam Z. Shakhshiri

I just ...

- published a book
- went back to school
- found my calling
- saw the world
- got married
- had a baby
- started my first job
- finished my last job



Whatever you've been up to, we'd like to hear about it. Send us an email with your stories or photos, and we'll share them in Class Notes.

casalum@bu.edu



Proofreading the President for Posterity

BY PATRICK L. KENNEDY

For one young alumna, working at the White House means more than climbing aboard *Air Force One* and playing fetch with Bo, the First Dog. (Although she has gotten to do both.) It's about keeping leaders in touch with the people, and preserving our nation's history.

Frances Wade (CAS'07)
Analyst, Correspondence Review Section, Office of Records Management, White House, Washington, D.C.

The office: Wade's department preserves the papers produced by the President and his staff—not only filing them for the White House's use, but also preserving the material in compliance with the Presidential Records Act, eventually transferring the records to the National Archives.

The job: "My primary role is to review outgoing correspondence from White House offices, including those of the President, First Lady, and Vice President." Wade is part of a three-person team that serves as the "last set of eyes" on missives to foreign leaders, replies to private citizens, and everything in between. "I review material for all potential errors, from grammatical issues to relevancy and accuracy of content. On a typical day it is not uncommon for me to see a hundred-plus letters."

Challenges: Wade has to tell the most powerful people in the world when they've committed a typo or grammatical error. It doesn't happen often, she says, but "writers know that when I send them an email or pop my head into an office it usually means that they will need to revise a letter."

Favorite part: "Soon after his inauguration, President Obama asked to see 10 letters a day from ordinary Americans," says Wade, and she reviews his responses. Those are "the most important letters I read," she says. "I have both witnessed and read about the overwhelmingly positive reactions people have when they receive a response to a letter they wrote to the President. It has been pretty amazing to be part of a process that allows people to be heard in a way they never thought possible."

Her background: Perennially on the dean's list, Wade was a two-time recipient of BU's Herbert and Mary Greig Scholarship in American History. Through University programs and connections, Wade interned at the Old State House Museum and the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library in Boston, and at the Naval Archives in D.C.

What helped: "Having focused on contemporary American history at BU has been incredibly helpful in my office. Most of my colleagues have been here for decades—our most senior employee started in the Kennedy administration and only recently retired. So having an awareness of history has been helpful in relating to them and proving myself around the office, showing that I understand the legacy of the presidency at large and am not just there for the fame associated with the White House."

The future: Wade also attends law school, part-time, at George Washington University, and she hopes to pursue a career in historic preservation. "My dream job would be working with UNESCO, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, doing consultations on world heritage sites, protecting locations, buildings, and statues that should be preserved in the years to come."