

OPINIONS & EXPRESSIONS

Beyond the Classroom Wall

Williams alumni generally cherish the education they received inside and outside the classroom. Two developments this year stand to make the latter even more lively.

This semester our new student center opened, pumping new life into the heart of campus. Named by the board in recognition of a wonderful gift to the College's endowment by Dave Paresky '60 and his wife, Linda, this stunning facility recreates the snack bar and mail room and adds a new dining facility; a grill serving pizza, beer and wine; offices for administrative functions and student groups; lounges; a small auditorium for movies and performances; meeting rooms; and a study space. Baxter Great Hall—a magnificent open area with stone fireplace—now becomes the College's living room.

The center hums with activity late into the night, its beauty and high functionality drawing students, faculty and staff. Members of the campus community are now more in contact—sharing enthusiasm for their various activities as well as just plain hanging out, a time when so many life-enriching and even life-changing conversations take place.

This academic year also marks the start of the College's new residential life system. Some 15 years after evolving away from the house system that President John Sawyer '39 devised to replace fraternities, Williams has adapted that system for the 21st century.

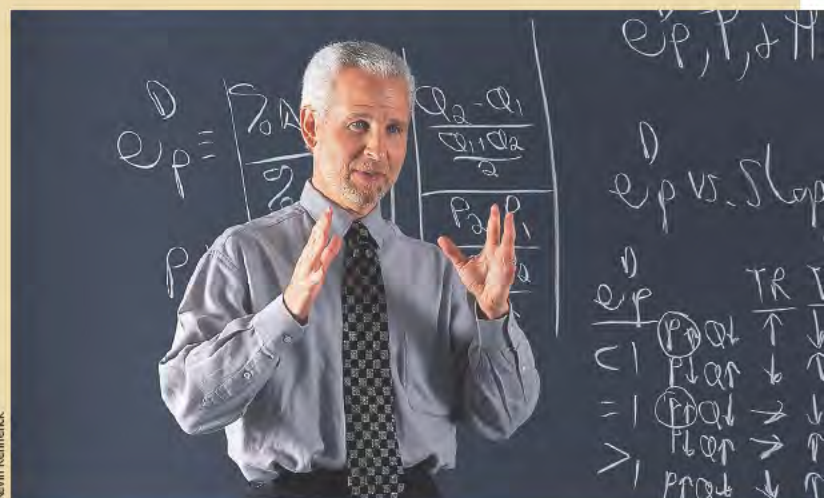
Over several years, the faculty-student-staff Committee on Undergraduate Life, led first by history professor Charles Dew '58 and then philosophy professor Will Dudley '89, devised a system

that combines the best aspects of the Sawyer model and of the "free agent" system that succeeded it.

All sophomores, juniors and seniors are now members of one of four neighborhoods centered around a particular house (Currier, Dodd, Spencer or Wood). At the end of their first year, students may stay with the neighborhood their entry is affiliated with or join a group of up to six friends to be assigned to a neighborhood at random. As juniors and seniors they'll be able to move into progressively more desirable rooms and suites within their neighborhood. The system will continue to develop, but early signs are encouraging.

The most noticeable change has been the number and variety of social events on campus. Charles Dew says, "It's quite extraordinary the wide range of activities that neighborhoods now organize. In addition to traditions like tailgating, there are now skating parties, board game nights, a snow ball dance and much more."

Another goal was to provide more natural ways for students to interact with faculty outside their majors. Each neighborhood has affiliated faculty and



Kevin Kenefick

staff members, and methods to bring them together are evolving. As Will Dudley reports, "I ate in the dining hall with my family three times this fall, compared with zero times over the previous eight years."

Another purpose was to break down the segregation of upper-class housing by class year that hampered the making of friends across those barriers. Without such hurdles, students over time will benefit more from the serendipitous friendships outside natural affinity groups that a residential college should foster.

The whole college has been involved with both projects, but special thanks go to Dean of the College Nancy Roseman, whose compelling argument for the need for a student center resulted in this magnificent building and whose leadership gave birth to the new housing system. These accomplishments mark seven years of exceptional service for her in this role as she returns this summer to full-time teaching and research in the biology department. She personifies the effort we exert each day to make a great college even better. ■

—Morty Schapiro

Why are those who reject God and religion always so angry at those who don't? Michael Menard '70 writes in the language of outrage, not calm rationality ("Religion vs. Liberal Arts," January 2007 letters, *Alumni Review*).

I wonder if Mr. Menard would also reject all the insights that we gain from poetry, drama and other literature that use image and metaphor to illuminate mysteries not easily understood by reason and scientific method. Does that mean that the visual arts and music do not also reveal realities beyond what can be reduced to empirical claims? And I wonder if he is aware that his own passionate defense of reason and scientific method is as much a defense of a "faith" as President Schapiro's defense of religious faith in the liberal arts ("Faith in the Liberal Arts," September 2006, *Alumni Review*)?

I'm too old to know very much about what it means to be "post modern." But I do know enough about it to know that it is liberating us from being imprisoned by enlightenment assumptions about what is useful information, if not truth. Mr. Menard needs to come into the 21st century.

—The Rev. John M. Good '60, Florissant, Mo.

I'd like to commend Morty Schapiro on his column "Faith in the Liberal Arts." After reading his words, I encountered the following from Francis Collins, director of the National Human Genome

matters of faith

Research Institute. "Faith is not the opposite of reason. Faith rests squarely upon reason, with the added component of revelation. ... [D]iscussions between scientists and believers happen quite readily. But neither scientists nor believers always embody the principles precisely. Scientists can have their judgment clouded by their professional aspirations. And the pure truth of faith, which you can think of as spiritual water, is poured into rusty vessels called human beings, and so sometimes the benevolent principles of faith can get distorted as positions are hardened."

Not everyone subscribes to either a personal or organized faith. However, respect for those who do must accompany any successful academic curriculum. We hope we can educate our child to respect his own while still having ears to hear journeys of others.

—Elizabeth Neely Clauser '90, Fort Worth, Texas

As a Williams liberal arts graduate, I respectfully disagree with Michael Menard '70, who stated, "Neither Williams nor the world needs more organized religion." Where one goes with Menard's statement really depends upon one's definition of religion. The Bible's definition is as follows: "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this: to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction and to keep oneself unspotted from the world" (James 1:27). To commit oneself to help the helpless in their time of need and to endeavor by God's grace to separate oneself from the all-too-prevalent tendencies toward greediness and selfishness; in my humble opinion, our weary and war-torn world could use more, not less, of that kind of pure religion. One can trace that kind of sincere commitment and selfless generosity historically over centuries, both at Williams (the birthplace—1806—of the worldwide American missions movement, still honored today by our Haystack Monument) and in the world (the examples of deliverance from slavery secured by Moses and of inner peace, forgiveness and salvation—even while being unjustly executed—personified by Jesus).

—William L. Ewen '66, New Haven, Conn.

LETTERS

The Alumni Review welcomes letters related to topics in the magazine. Send letters to: Alumni Review, P.O. Box 676, Williamstown, Mass., 01267-0676; fax: 413.597.4158; e-mail alumni.review@williams.edu. Letters may be edited for clarity and space.



OPINIONS & EXPRESSIONS

Moving Williams' Memory

by Mark C. Maniak

Packing for a move can be a pretty stressful experience. But imagine how much more complicated it would be if you had to prepare to move hundreds of thousands of items ranging in size from a felt beanie to Bing Crosby's traveling piano—all the while making sure these items would be available to and protected for future archivists and researchers?

That's the work we're engaged in right now in the College's Archives and Special Collections in preparation for our "big move" out of Stetson Hall to temporary quarters until a new library opens in 2011. My job as the collections archivist involves inventorying and stabilizing a diverse array of collections and materials in preparation for the move.

What kinds of "stuff," as we unofficially call it in the archival world, are we moving? Records of the Board of Trustees, presidents and administrators dating back to the 18th century. An array of materials from fraternities and student groups past and present. Holdings of the original College library from 1794. An assortment of films, videos, blueprints, scrapbooks, T-shirts, plates, maps, models, canes and photographs. In essence, we're moving Williams' memory.

A major step in this complex process has been creating a detailed database to inventory and track our collections by name, title, collection number and location (down to the shelf) of each box or folder.

I and several student assistants already have inventoried 2,980 linear feet of stuff, representing 501 collections of varying sizes—most of the archives' boxed collections.

We also check to make sure that each item is in a container that can protect it properly. The container (usually a box or folder) has to be archivally sound, meaning that it is acid-free, and must be able to protect the item when it is handled and moved. Scrapbooks have to be boxed, papers placed in acid-free envelopes, photographs placed in glassine or polyester envelopes, books shrink-wrapped, and artifacts wrapped in acid-free bubble wrap or placed in cradles of inert foam.

One of the more challenging projects has been boxing the Paul Whiteman Collection, which, in addition to some 4,000 manuscript arrangements of orchestral jazz dating from the 1920s to the 1940s, also includes 5,474 phonograph discs, Crosby's piano and an invitation—printed on a dinner plate (see photo)—to a 20th anniversary celebration for Whiteman. We use a polyethylene foam (called ethafoam) that comes in planks two to four inches thick to build customized nests for bulky and irregularly shaped items that are then placed in boxes. Some of our student employees have taken a particular delight in putting knife to foam.

Other packing challenges involve large photographs in frames, Victorias, a rolled muslin drop, the old College bookstore's 14-foot

wooden sign, a banjo and numerous oversized vinyl, glass and metal phonograph discs. With each collection there is usually a new and interesting challenge.

So the next time you

are packing to move, think of us in the archives. It may not make your work easier, but you have our sympathy. I'm off to cut some more foam. Where is the acid-free bubble-wrap? ■

Mark Maniak is a collections archivist with Williams Archives and Special Collections. Archivists Sylvia Kennick Brown and Linda Hall also contributed to this essay.



"IMAGINE IF YOU HAD TO ... MOVE HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF ITEMS RANGING IN SIZE FROM A FELT BEANIE TO BING CROSBY'S TRAVELING PIANO."

SCENE AND HERD

SUSTAINABILITY GOALS SET

In January President Morty Schapiro and the trustees unanimously endorsed the College's Climate Action Committee report on greenhouse gas emissions. The committee, chaired by Stephanie Boyd, manager of special projects, set goals of reducing emissions by 5 percent below the College's 1990-91 levels by 2012 and 10 percent by 2020. It found that energy use at Williams had increased 50 percent since 1990-1991 and emissions by 44 percent.

Among the strategies identified to help attain these goals, the committee advocated educating campus members in energy conservation, using lower emission fuels, minimizing future campus construction and adopting renewable energy sources. Williams has long been concerned with environmental issues (its Center for Environmental Studies is among the oldest in the country), and the new initiative seeks to establish the College's place in the emerging effort to reverse climate

change by reducing its carbon footprint. "As an educational institution, our great influence derives from our students, who, in this case, will be involved in multiple ways with an engaging and important effort, the lessons from which they take with them as they enter the wider world," said Schapiro. "Sustainability thus becomes for Williams a guiding principle, like those of accessibility and diversity."

MERRILL NAMED DEAN OF THE COLLEGE

Karen R. Merrill, associate professor of history, will succeed Nancy A. Roseman as dean of the College on July 1. Merrill, who also serves as director of the Center for Environmental Studies, is a historian of the 20th century specializing in the American West and the environment. At Williams since 1999,



Merrill has served on the Committee on Academic Standing, the Committee on Pedagogy and Evaluation and the Stetson-Sawyer Planning Committee. As dean she will assume responsibility for all aspects of student life. Roseman will return to full-time teaching and research in the biology department.

NEW STUDENT CENTER OPENS

The Paresky Center opened just in time for February's Winter Carnival after more

than two years of construction. Located on the site of the old student union, the Paresky Center houses a snack bar and mail room, as did Baxter Hall. In addition, the center incorporates a range of social spaces, a performance space, meeting rooms and offices for student

organizations. Designed by Polshek Partnership Architects of New York, the

continued on page 6

For more information on any of these stories, visit www.williams.edu and enter the topic into the search field.

They Said:

A collection of opinions and ideas expressed in Web blogs and in *The Williams Record*, which can be found online at www.williamsrecord.com

"The staff is so excited. It's like we just landed on the moon." —*Robert Volpi, director of dining services, anticipating the opening of the new student center. Record. 2.7.07*

"The Class of 2009 represented the most socioeconomically diverse class in Williams history, with nearly 49 percent of the class qualifying for need-based

financial aid." —*Mark Robertson, assistant director of admissions. Record. 2.14.07.*

"The central part of campus is being ripped up and could disrupt our academic and social lives." —*Karen Merrill, newly appointed dean of the college, anticipating the challenges of the multi-year Stetson-Sawyer construction project. Record. 1.17.07*

SCENE AND HERD

Climb far.

THE WILLIAMS CAMPAIGN

PARESKY CENTER GOES LIVE

On day one, only hours after opening its doors, the new Paresky Center, successor to Baxter Hall, had become a place for the Williams community to gather, to eat, to study and to relax.

The Paresky Center is a major initiative of The Williams Campaign. To learn more about the Campaign, visit www.williams.edu/alumni/campaign/.



Ben Rudick '08

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building is named in honor of David Paresky '60 and his wife, Linda.

PARENTS SUPPORT STUDENTS

Dr. and Mrs. Ching C. Chen P'07 have endowed a scholarship (through Dr. Chen's company, National Shipping Lines) in support of international students, with particular emphasis on students of Taiwanese and Filipino descent. The gift will provide some \$45,000 each year, supporting an average of two students. The Chens' scholarship brings gifts to The Williams Campaign for international student aid to a total of \$10 million.

As part of its strategic plan, the College decided to increase the number of international students in 2001 and to diversify that group by becoming one of the few colleges and universities in the country to admit international students without regard to their financial situations, promising to meet their financial needs for four years.

YOUNG ALUM KILLED BY IED IN IRAQ

Nathan Krissoff '03 died in a roadside bombing in Anbar province on Dec. 9, 2006. A first lieutenant in the U.S. Marine Corps, Krissoff served as a counterintelligence officer. A political science major at the College, he worked for the Monterey Institute of International Studies in Washington before volunteering for military service.

RISING STAR

Brad Nichol '02 spent the first 22 years of his life either rocketing down a ski slope or skimming across the water in a sailboat. For the past three years, he's focused on the latter with tremendous results. Nichol and his teammate Andy Horton were named the U.S. Sailing Team of the Year in 2006 and are now eyeing the 2008 Summer Olympics in China. In a recent interview, with the *Alumni Review* Nichol discussed:

Being named best in his sport in the U.S.: "It was very fulfilling. ... We put in

a tremendous amount of effort this year and had some excellent results. The real challenge is going to be keeping it going so we are Team of the Year in 2008."

Representing his country in the 2008 Olympics: "I was a competitive alpine racer growing up and at Williams and had some close friends compete in the Olympics. I have dreamed about marching into the Olympic stadium waving the American flag."

His start in sailing: "I grew up on a lake in New Hampshire (Lake Sunapee) that happened to have one of the largest fleets of Star boats in the world. My father raced Stars. ... One day after a race, my mother handed me to my dad, and I 'sailed' the boat from the finish to the dock. When my father was called up to receive his award, he sent me. ... I was hooked. The Lake Sunapee Star Fleet did a wonderful job of promoting sailing. ... It was great to have the exposure to an Olympic class at an early age."

Sailing at Williams: "Williams does not have a high-powered sailing team ... but



we did have a club with 12 boats. I spent three years motivating students to come out and practice, organizing trips to regattas and dealing with all the challenges of keeping a sailing club going at a small school. The organizational and leadership skills that I learned have made it possible to manage an Olympic program that sends two \$40,000 boats around the world to race in Europe and China while coordinating practices, an active race schedule, coaching, travel, fundraising and publicity. The campaign takes just as much time off the water as it does on the water."

Skiing vs. sailing: "Each is an incredible rush. But ... I have not been skiing in over two years. ... I really miss ripping down a perfectly groomed run!"

What it takes to win Olympic gold: "The U.S. has [won] medals in 12 of the past 17 summer games since the boat was first used in 1932. Currently, the U.S. has six of the top 12 ranked Star teams in the world. ... Over the next year Andy and I will have to qualify the country for the Olympics by finishing in the top 12 in the World Championships in Cascais, Portugal, and then we will have to win the U.S. Team Trials in October in Marina del Rey, Calif. After the trials we will have nine months to prepare for our ultimate challenge."

ATHLETES GIVE THE GIFT OF TIME

Most of the 160 or so troubled children and teens living at four residential Hillcrest Educational Centers in northwestern Massachusetts don't get to go home for the holidays. But the center's Holiday Wish Program—with a big boost from Williams'

Athletics Department—helps to brighten an otherwise difficult time.

Since 2001, College administrators, coaches and athletes have joined together to become the program's largest contributing organization—donating a record 200 gifts last December based on wish lists filled out by the children. Over the years, contributions have increased five-fold, and preparing for the morning gift-giving session now includes a huge wrapping party in Chandler Gym.

"The kids are just aglow with smiles," said Hillcrest Director of Development

Steven Conroy. "It makes the day especially meaningful for them, that other people care about them and have taken the time to make their day really special."

Abby Taylor '07 and several of her teammates on the women's ice hockey team purchased a remote-control car, a pullover fleece and an action figure for a 15-year-old boy.

"It's nice to know we can make them smile, even just for the morning," Taylor says.

"Everyone in the city knew exactly who we were and why we were in Mexico. ... It is an unbelievable feeling to put on your shoulder pads and read USA across the front of your jersey."

—Chris Kenney '07 on being one of 50 U.S. collegiate football players selected for the 2006 Aztec Bowl, Aguascalientes. He started at center for the USA, which won the game, 28-7.

"They have been impact players since the first time they stepped on the court at Williams. To have three 1,000-point scorers in one class is an amazing accomplishment for our program, and I think any one of those three would be the first to admit they could not have done it without their teammates."

—Pat Manning, women's basketball coach, on the star performances of Maggie Miller, Meghan O'Malley and Meghan Stetson, all Class of 2007.

"I've really enjoyed the kids and I am going to miss that. ... But I will not miss the hours. And the undefeated [football] season, it was a great way to be able to go out. I'm going to feel it, but I'm also going to feel that there is a light at the end of the tunnel."

—Ron Stant, head Williams athletic trainer, on his upcoming May retirement after 39 years at the College.

SPORTS WRAP



SCENE AND HERD

the list CLIMB HIGH

Life is additive. To create one photo exhibit about diversity at Williams, a surprising array of elements was needed. According to photographer Kevin Kennefick, his three-day shoot in January at the '62 Center required:

- 8 dozen cookies
- 92 bottles of water
- 120 donuts
- 160 sitters (70 students, 70 staff members and 20 faculty)
- 204 gigabytes of memory
- 2,370 shutter snaps
- 1 oft-requested Rolling Stones CD

Afterward, in order to recover from some 27 hours spent on his feet, Kennefick's aching back needed:

- 3 days of icepacks
- 4 days of Tiger Balm
- 2 massages

The portraits, along with each subject's self-description, will go on display at a venue near you—on the Web and around campus—under the rubric **Williams**, part of a project that grew out of Williams' Diversity Initiatives.

No one was keeping an official count, but it did seem as if the process involved the repetition of one particular phrase. About 160 times the words "*I hate having my picture taken*" echoed. Yet the results—lots of smiling faces—belie the grumblings.

IN MEMORIAM

J. Hodge Markgraf '52, died Jan. 11, 2007 at age 76. Long a fixture at Williams, the Ohio-born Markgraf graduated *summa cum laude* and *Phi Beta Kappa* from the College. On the way to his Ph.D. in chemistry from Yale in 1957, he was awarded a Fulbright Fellowship to the University of Munich.

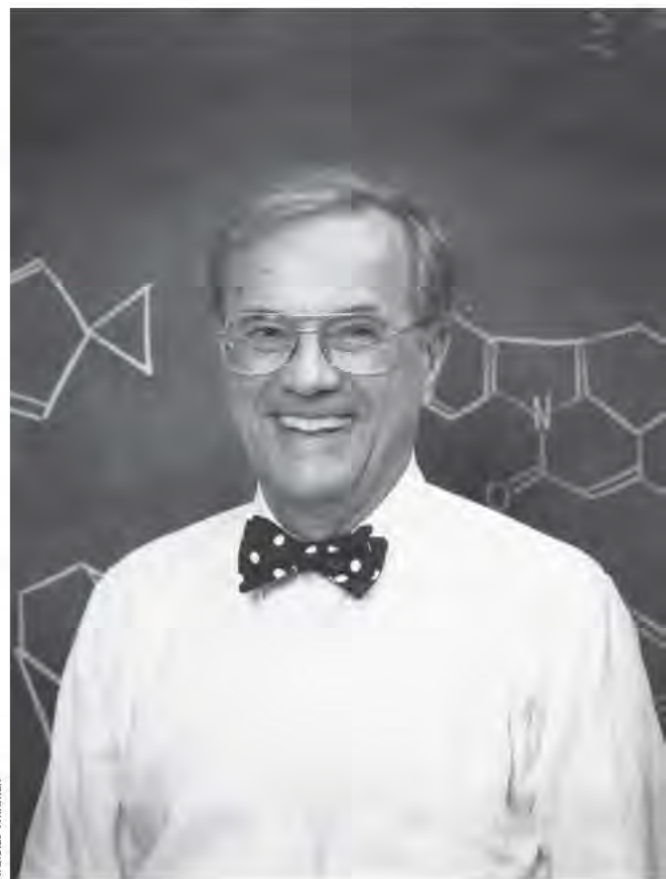
For two years he worked as a research chemist at Procter & Gamble, but in the fall of 1959 he returned to Williamstown, where he would remain for more than four decades. He retired in 1998 as Ebenezer Fitch Professor of Chemistry, emeritus. He also served as chair of the chemistry department, provost and College marshal. In

addition, Markgraf was VP for alumni relations and development during both the Third Century Campaign and the College's bicentennial celebration in 1993.

Markgraf's research earned him funding from the National Science Foundation, Pfizer Inc., the Dreyfus Foundation and other grantors. His teaching and research focused on organic and heterocyclic chemistry. He was honored by the College with a Rogerson Cup—the highest award for alumni service—and with a Bicentennial Medal for distinguished achievement in any field of endeavor.

As President Morty Schapiro observed, "No one loved this college more than Hodge, and no one served it with more passion and spunk."

Markgraf's wife, Nancy, died in August 2006. He is survived by two daughters and a grandson.



Nicholas Whitman



Kevin Kennefick

Andrea Park '10

Catching Fire

Out in the backcountry of British Columbia, a single lightning strike can cause irreparable damage to old-growth forests, some of which date back hundreds of years. Given the mountainous terrain and lack of roads, there's only one way into a fire zone—from the air. Hanging from the first line of defense is a venturesome Williams alumna.

BY ANDREA BLAIKIE '96, *as told to Denise DiFulco*

It's the summer of 2006, and my colleagues and I watch as hundreds of lightning strikes illuminate the computer screen in front of us. We're monitoring passing electrical storms as they make their way across the massive woodlands of British Columbia, knowing that any one of the tiny, pink squares flashing on the monitor already could have ignited a forest fire. As we make a game of guessing from where the first calls will come, our BlackBerrys start humming and the atmosphere becomes decidedly more serious. In less than 30 minutes I'll be in the air, hovering near the flames in a Bell 212 helicopter, ready to drop to the ground and inspect the fire by way of a nylon rope.

Our three-person Rapattack crew (myself included) makes a run for the lockers. Rapattack crews are initial attack firefighting crews that are specialized to suppress flare-ups within the remote and steep terrain of the province's backcountry. Because these areas are so difficult to reach and so tricky to navigate, we must come in by air and use rappelling equipment to lower ourselves to the forest floor.

I suit up in a protective shirt, pants, boots and a hard hat, then strap on a rappel harness in my usual fashion—chest strap, waist strap, left leg, right leg (a superstitious ritual, for sure). Just before stepping into the chopper, the helicopter operations technician (HOT), who will direct our



Raymond K. Gehman/Getty Images

“It wasn’t until I attended Williams that I discovered my passion for outdoor work. While I was there, I studied anthropology, rowed with women’s crew and played Ultimate Frisbee. But my appetite was whet during my junior year when I visited the Grand Canyon with the Outing Club.”

descent, gives my gear one last check. Conversation is impossible with the rotor blades thrashing overhead, so I give my usual signal that I’m satisfied—two claps and a thumbs-up—and climb on board.

Once we’re in flight, our crew, pilot and the HOT have moments to strategize, taking into account the weather, the potential physical hazards and the behavior of the fire. We circle around a couple of times looking for possible escape routes and a good spot to rappel. All we need is a three-foot-wide break in the tree canopy. My last little ritual happens in suspension as the HOT checks the landing site and my rope one last time. I take one deep breath to relax, clear my mind of everything but my surroundings and let my muscle

memory take over as I descend through the smoky sky.

My employer, the British Columbia Forest Service Protection Branch, is charged with safeguarding the province’s 149 million acres of forested land, including more than 62 million acres of old-growth forests. But our work is not just about protecting irreplaceable, natural treasures. The forest industry is a cornerstone of the economy here, producing more than \$16 billion in products annually and employing more than 80,000 people. With an average of 2,500 wildfires a year, there’s a constant threat to the livelihoods of thousands of workers.

It’s strange how I came to work here—and as a firefighter, no less. I didn’t grow up in an adventurous family; and downtown Montreal, where I was raised, isn’t exactly the hinterland. It wasn’t until I attended Williams that I discovered my passion for outdoor work. While I was there, I studied anthropology, rowed with women’s crew and played Ultimate Frisbee. But my appetite was whet during my junior year when I visited the Grand Canyon with the Outing Club. From there I decided to spend a summer in Idaho with the Student Conservation Association, and after graduation I became an outdoor guide, leading commercial biking and walking tours through France, Spain, Italy, Morocco, Cuba and the U.S.

Despite the great adventures I was having, a part of me wanted to come back home. My husband, Jason Pospisil, and I were married in 2004 and settled in Mount Currie, British Columbia, not far from Whistler, where he works as a mechanic at Blackcomb Mountain. When I’m not fighting fires, I’ll sometimes work on ski patrol there, treating and transporting injured skiers but also performing avalanche control. That, of course, is a whole other story.

My Rapattack crew is stationed in Salmon Run, about halfway between Vancouver and Calgary. We’re on duty from May through September, though the fire season reaches its peak in mid-June. The job can be treacherous, with dangers both in the air and on the ground. We can rappel as much as 280 feet down though the thick cover of Western cedar, Western hemlock and Douglas



Andrea Blaikie '96 (left) with Rap Kilo, the three-person crew she served on last summer, at a fire near Blue River, British Columbia. Also pictured: crew leader Brian Fishbook (center) and Pilar Peterson.



Top left: A rappeller wearing a full-body harness trains in the "tower," a structure built to model the fuselage and skids of an actual helicopter. Attached to his rope is a metal tube called a Sky Genie, which allows the firefighters' descent. Right: the rappel locker where gear is checked.

I really enjoy the physical activity. But most of all, I love the cerebral nature of working outdoors. Once the helicopter has pulled away there is quiet, and my thoughts are so clear.

fir—many of which are at least 150 feet tall. While we're making our descent, ropes can get caught in tree limbs. As we're inspecting an area, trees with burned-out roots can topple with no notice. Then there are the natural hazards present in any mountainous forest, like unstable terrain—and bears.

Once we're on the ground, the helicopter comes back around to drop our supplies, which include chain saws, tents, food and water, since sometimes we'll stay on site for up to three days. The fires generally range from the size of a dining room table to the size of a couple of rooms in the average house. Our job is to create a guard around them by cutting down nearby trees or by digging and cutting out roots. (Yes, fire can travel underground.) The ground contains many clues about a forest fire's progress, so we'll also "cold trail," meaning that we'll get down on our hands and knees to feel the earth for hot spots. When we're satisfied that a fire has been contained, we'll head back to camp and await the next call. On larger fires, we're often called in to create helipads and

to open access for larger crews into more remote parts of the fire. That generally requires an inordinate amount of chainsaw work to fell trees.

I really enjoy the physical activity. But most of all, I love the cerebral nature of working outdoors. Once the helicopter has pulled away there is quiet, and my thoughts become so clear. At some point, early in my career, I got hooked on that feeling of being able to simplify life. It's really easy to find physically demanding jobs without being in the backcountry. But that was the difference: Everything here feels so calm and so simple. I have a hard time seeing myself living or working anywhere else. Whether I'm fighting fires or patrolling the slopes or doing something entirely different, this is where I want to be. ■

Denise DiFulco is a writer and editor based in Cranford, N.J. Photos provided by Andrea Blaikie '96, unless noted.

Profs .com...

Blogs are becoming an increasingly popular way for scholars—including several members of the Williams community—to share their work and insight with a wide audience. But sometimes the publicity these Web journals generate can backfire.

By Cathleen McCarthy

At a recent luncheon at Princeton, Marc Lynch, surrounded by former diplomats and some of the most distinguished scholars in his field, was surprised to hear himself introduced by Islam historian Michael Cook not only as the author of *Voices of the New Arab Public* and associate professor at Williams, but also as the blogger Abu Aardvark.

“And Bernard Lewis nodded along,” Lynch reported in his blog the next day, referring to the Princeton professor emeritus and well-known Middle East scholar. “This blogging thing really might be getting out of hand.”

Venerated scholars like Cook and Lewis may not be writing their own online commentaries yet, but they are obviously reading them. Abu Aardvark appeals not only to scholars of the Middle East but also to anyone attempt-

Lynch initially opted to use an alias in order to keep his online opinions separate from his teaching career.

mainstream bloggers attract. “There’s quantity and then there’s quality,” he says. “I have a very high-quality readership. By that, I mean a substantial percentage of other academics, journalists, editors, policy makers—which means more to me in some ways. It allows me to reach people who make a difference.”

Lynch attracts, for example, readers in the U.S. state and defense departments and in military intelligence. “It can be a little frightening sometimes,” he says. “The nature of blogging is shifting. It started as a hobby, and now it’s become a vital part of my professional output. Blogging is the means of reaching a large audience, and that creates its own demands. Walking away now would actually have an impact.”

From the beginning, Abu Aardvark has served as an extension of the research Lynch was doing on a daily basis. But balancing the blog, which he still enjoys but now considers “a professional obligation,” with “a heavy teaching load, active research and a family” has required adjustments he never considered when he launched the site in 2002.

At the time, Abu Aardvark was not only a catchy title, it was a pseudonym. Like many academic bloggers, Lynch initially opted to use an alias in order to keep his online opinions separate from his teaching career. Then in May 2005, he was invited to engage in an online debate with libertarian-conservative blogger Daniel Drezner ’90, via Kevin Drum’s popular blog at *The Washington Monthly*. Lynch decided to come out of the blogger closet.

That decision opened doors. As the Princeton gathering reflects, Lynch’s blog is now considered part of his accomplishments and reputation. His *Voices of the New Arab Public* (Columbia University Press, 2005) has become an academic best seller. “The blog definitely helped a lot,” Lynch

says. “The book got a lot of publicity among bloggers who read it and wrote about it.”

When Sam Crane, a professor of political science at Williams, began contemplating a blog, Lynch urged him to do it. A specialist in East Asia politics and international relations, Crane launched Useless Tree (uselesstree.typepad.com) in June 2005 and now gets about 100 visits per day. His blog grew out of his interest in ancient Chinese philosophy—particularly Confucianism and Taoism—which he began teaching three years ago. Like Lynch, Crane starts every day with a scan of international news—in his case, anything affecting China. But Crane uses Useless Tree to ponder philosophical questions more than political ones, such as: What would Confucius think of China’s growing nouveau riche?

Crane is working on a book about bringing ancient Chinese philosophy into everyday conversations and says blogging keeps him connected daily to many texts. “The central theme



ing to understand a culture dramatically affecting the rest of the world.

For the last five years, Lynch has scanned the Arab press, translating reports to English and offering a twice-daily online analysis of Arab media, culture and public opinion and of American public diplomacy in the Middle East. Abu Aardvark (abuaardvark.typepad.com) attracts 500 to 2,000 readers per day but spikes whenever events in the Middle East top the news. During the peak of the conflict in Lebanon last summer, Lynch’s blog attracted nearly 5,000 readers daily. That number jumps to 10,000 or even 20,000 when a post gets a link from high-traffic bloggers like Kevin Drum of *The Washington Monthly* or Matthew Yglesias of *The American Prospect*, the sort of “center-left” political writers who favor Lynch’s point of view.

Yet Lynch doesn’t see himself competing for the audiences these

Crane uses *Useless Tree* to ponder philosophical questions more than political ones, such as: What would Confucius think of China's growing nouveau riche?

of Confucius is living a good life and acting in a moral or ethical way. It's about the importance of attending first to one's closest relations before building the roles at work and in the world," Crane says. "That's a hard thing to do. I'm closer to a Taoist philosophy myself, but I like thinking through Confucius kinds of questions and problems."

Lynch says he would think twice before offering junior faculty the advice he gave Crane. "If you have enemies, a long blog history becomes a treasure trove of things people can use against you," he says. "A blog increases your visibility and can create jealousy and resentment."

Publicity from blogging can backfire on an academic career, as both Drezner and University of Michigan professor Juan Cole recently discovered. Last summer, Cole was passed over for a Yale chair after being called a "notorious anti-Israel academic" in *The Wall Street Journal* and criticized in other high-profile media. Just a few months earlier, Drezner was denied tenure at the University of Chicago, a move widely attributed to his blog.

Drezner quickly landed on his feet, announcing online three weeks later that he had accepted a tenured position at Tufts University. He is now associate professor of international politics at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy. "In terms of my job at the University of Chicago, my overall take is that the blog did not matter as much as the media coverage suggested," Drezner says. "But it also probably mattered more than some members of the tenure committee were saying."

For Tufts, a professional public policy school, Drezner's fame—"or notoriety, however you want to look at it," he quips—was undoubtedly regarded as a plus. "It's not like they hired me because of the blog, but I think it's safe to say they saw it as a positive rather than a negative."

Drezner was reading political blogs long before he started his own. "Then 9/11 happened," he says. "People became much more concerned about foreign policy and international relations. I thought I could blog about those things as someone who had been trained to study them. I was already writing op-eds on this stuff, but no one wanted to publish them."

Before he launched his blog on the first anniversary of 9/11, Drezner could not get the op-ed editor at the *Chicago Tribune* to return his e-mails. A few months later, he was being solicited by editors of *The New Republic*, where he now writes a column, and *The New York Times*, where he contributes book reviews. His blog (danieldrezner.com) logs some 4,000 readers a day, and a

single post can elicit 50 comments. A major benefit of blogging, he says, is "you get a much larger megaphone if you want to be a public intellectual. It's another way in which to make your name in the field."

Nevertheless, Drezner adds, "Blogs are still looked at by academics the same way they looked at TV in the '50s: as a really tawdry medium we don't talk about in polite company but everybody reads anyway. In 10 or 15 years, it might be that blogs are considered something else academics do. You're already seeing more senior academics deciding to blog. Whole departments are devoted to them."

Lynch, Drezner and Crane all try to keep their blogs separate from their teaching. None but Drezner brings it up in class, and he did so only after it became obvious his Tufts students read the blog. "You know the old *Seinfeld* episode about worlds colliding? That happened with me as blogger and me as professor," Drezner jokes. "Now I open my classes saying, 'By the way, you might know I have a blog. You certainly don't need to read it, and I certainly don't expect you to read it back to me in this class.' That pretty much clears things up."

Drezner now seems poised to become an expert on academic blogging. Due out soon is the book *The Political Promise of Blogging* (University of Michigan Press), which he co-edited with fellow blogger Henry Farrell, an assistant professor of political science and international affairs at George Washington University. As for books in his field, Drezner had one on international relations when he began blogging. He co-edited another in 2003 and has two more coming out: *All Politics is Global* (Princeton University Press) and *U.S. Trade Strategy* (Council on Foreign Relations).

How does he find time for all this? It's a question successful academic



bloggers frequently hear. The perception of blogging as a time waster was at the heart of the debate over Drezner's tenure decision. "As academics, we take words very seriously," Drezner says. "There is a tendency by those who publish only scholarly work—which is a perfectly valid way to proceed—to assume any other form of writing takes the same amount of time. And that's not true. The time it takes me to write an article for the *American Journal of Political Science* is much greater than the time it takes to write a really long blog post—yet both can involve the same amount of words."

It's not unusual, after all, for a blog post to involve five paragraphs snipped from a newspaper article and only one written by the blogger. "An interesting irony is that blogs make a great deal of being different from mainstream media, but at the point we're at now, good bloggers function very similarly to newspaper editors," Drezner points out. "They decide which stories they think are important and which aren't."

Lynch says that for many of his online readers, he serves as a highly sophisti-

cated clipping service and even a translator. One reason he can fit blogging into his schedule is that analysis of Arab media was already part of his daily routine. He relies on his own blog archives for academic research, and he's not the only one.

"Arabic search engines are extremely poor," Lynch says. "If it's in the newspaper today, it might not be there three days from now. But I include links to all the articles I reference so they're cached and I can pull them up later."

He recently started adding these links on his blog as a sidebar with brief comments. "I've been told by many fellow academics and government people that they find this incredibly useful. They don't have time to troll through a dozen newspapers—and they don't have to because they trust my judgment. It's become a crib sheet for them."

As masters of the concise, conversational tone blogs require, both Lynch and Drezner attract readers with their writing as well. "One of the most useful classes I ever took in college was Jim Shepard's fiction writing class," Drezner says, referring to the J. Leland Miller Professor of American History, Literature and Eloquence at Williams. "Jim is a Raymond Carver disciple, and Carver's principle is no useless words or punctuation marks. That skill applies to blogging as well as scholarly writing:

WELCOME TO THE BLOGOSPHERE...

Just in case your trusty *Webster's* is a bit out of date, a "blog" is a Web journal. Typically, the creator of a blog (in cyber-argot, the blogger) offers online commentary on his or her favorite topic. Many blogs are devoted to politics, food, music, celebrity gossip and travel, but the range of subject matter is virtually unlimited.

Most blogs are open-ended, rather like diaries that build from one day's experiences and thoughts to the next, although the entries appear in the reverse of their order of composition, with the newest ones first. Many blogs integrate images with text together with links to other sites on the Web. Reader responses are often welcomed, too.

The etymology of blog? The word is the result of a conversational contraction of "Web log."

Get to the point."

There is an irreverence to both Drezner's and Lynch's blogs that makes even the most grave subject matter approachable—even, at times, fun. In a recent post, Lynch reported on two videos of Ayman al-Zawahiri, an al-Qaida leader and former head of the Egyptian Islamic Jihad, which he accessed and translated before they became public. Lynch compared al-Zawahiri's performance to "Eminem's rap battles at the end of *8 Mile*, with Zawahiri going directly after Bush's perceived strengths (the war on terror,

Iraq) with what is at least meant to be devastating mockery."

"I think my blog is funny a lot of the time," Lynch says. "So is Dan's—and that may make us seem at times as if we're not serious scholars. On the other hand, if your blog reveals you to have deep, intimate knowledge of a subject, a sharp mind and good writing skills, it will probably count for you. Before I started my blog, I had a good reputation in political science and Middle Eastern studies. Now I am much better known—and it's not just having four years more experience under my belt. I believe the Internet and blogs, in a very real way, are where it's at now in public debate." ■

Cathleen McCarthy is a writer based in Philadelphia, Pa.

“Blogs are still looked at by academics the same way they looked at TV in the '50s: as a really tawdry medium we don't talk about in polite company but everybody reads anyway.” —Drezner



Pictures for an Exhibition

Photograph by Kevin Bubriski



Though it might look chaotic . . .

to the casual observer, the Williams College Museum of Art's mat room is a study in precision. Nearly every surface is covered in the ordinary (tape, staple guns, hinges, pliers) and—to the visitor—the odd (a double-insulated speed-bloc finishing sander, a giant roll of bubble wrap). One drawer is simply labeled “Hmm.”

Back here, behind the galleries, museum preparators design and build environments for artwork that are as much a part of the visual experience as the pieces that will be on display. They work with media ranging in scale and scope from pots, pans and kitchen utensils (Zhan Wang's “Urban Landscapes”) to 46 monitors showing artists' early experimental work alongside paintings (“Moving Pictures”) to nine massive bronze and granite sculptures (Louise Bourgeois' “Eyes”). Each exhibition is noted with one or two words written in a precise hand in a thick month-at-a-glance calendar book.

On the day this photograph was taken, Hideyo Okamura, WCMA's exhibition designer and chief

preparator for the last 11 years, was framing paintings for the soon-to-open “Teaching with Art: Images of Krishna from the Collection.” The show is central to a spring seminar about Krishna taught by visiting art professor Catherine Becker.

Along with preparators Gregory Smith and Michael Chapman, Okamura works side by side with professors like Becker, museum curators and often the artists themselves.

“My job,” says Okamura, himself a working artist, “is to make sure the exhibition is what the artist or curator intended.”

The preparators also are responsible for framing, packing and crating art, building archival boxes to house art objects and mount making. Often, remnants of past exhibitions find their way onto the walls of the mat room, as is the case with signs of many colors and typefaces that read “Please do not enter the sculpture” and “Please do not touch the artwork.” In this space, though, one *must* touch, provided he or she has the right credentials.

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BY ZELDA STERN

PHOTOGRAPHY BY KEVIN BUBRISKI

Looking at a map of the Williams campus, it's pretty easy to figure out where students go to nourish their minds and their bodies. Classrooms, libraries, dining halls, fields, fitness centers, running trails and the like are all clearly labeled. Less evident are the spaces and places students visit to nurture and challenge the rest of themselves—their spirits, their souls, their centers.

Last fall, the *Alumni Review* asked students where they go to search for truth beyond the classroom, to pursue the intangible, nonmaterial good, to center themselves and widen their frames of reference. A sampling of their answers follows.

Alcia Jackson '07

Psychology and French studies major; co-chair, Students of Caribbean Ancestry; member, Nothing But Cuties hip-hop dance group

I joined the **GOSPEL CHOIR** freshman year. I'd never done it before. I don't know how to sing. That was one of the biggest appeals. It was never about being able to sing by professional standards. It's a lot about fellowship and spreading the word of God through song. We give a free concert on the first day of reading period. It gives the campus a time to unwind.

The group is multicultural. There are no barriers. If you're interested and you want to sing, you are welcome.

For me, it's a way of getting closer to God, a way of finding peace I can't get in regular day-to-day activities. Going to practice on Friday is a way of relaxing for me. We warm up by singing praise and worship songs. Then we practice. At the end people volunteer praise reports—something good that happened during the week—and share prayer requests. Other people can identify with you and you know you have that support system.

Amanda Strogoff '07

English and psychology major; rugby player; member, Jewish Association and Queer Student Union; helped create a 36-foot meditation labyrinth on campus

There's a **LABYRINTH** that Williams puts up at the First Congo Church a couple of times each semester, usually around midterms and finals. It's a huge expanse of canvas with a purple design on it that demarcates a circuitous path. It looks like a maze, but unlike a maze, you can't get lost in it; there's only one path. The labyrinth is open to anyone on campus.

It takes me about 40 minutes to walk it. It's hard to walk slowly and consciously, but I still find it very relaxing. You say to yourself, "I'm here. I'm going to breathe and take a step." I pop in in the middle of the day to slow down. By the time I get to the center, I feel centered. I'm not worrying about unimportant little things.

Whenever they put it up, there are pamphlets and books about it by the entrance. Some books tell you to concentrate on a phrase or an idea. I sometimes try that, or sometimes I get songs I love in my head. Whatever happens, I think I wind up someplace better than where I started.



Alcia Jackson (left) and the gospel choir

Stephen Spinelli '07

Music major, voice and piano student, swimmer

Music is my life. We students take on a lot. ... It can get pretty overwhelming. When I walk into the **MUSIC PRACTICE ROOM** and close the door, I seal off all other noise. There's a feeling of, "Ah, all those other sounds are gone. I have this hour in which there'll only be nice sounds. This one hour is for me." It's amazing how therapeutic it is. It calms me. It's almost as if I've taken a nap. You know how when you have something that's really eating away at you, you take a nap and wake up thinking, "Why did I think that was such a big deal?" It gives me back my perspective. If I didn't do this, I'd be less willing, less able, to give back. It puts me in a place where I'm excited about doing things for other people. It doesn't take me out of myself. It puts me back.

Spaces on campus set aside for formal religious observance include the **Jewish Religious Center**, **Thompson Chapel**—which also houses a **Catholic chapel** and a **Muslim prayer room**—and a **Zen meditation hut** in a converted ice house near Weston Field.

Matt Summers '07

Physics major, Williams Outing Club president

The Outing Club had a retreat recently where we asked ourselves why the outdoors is so important. For me, it's the quality of the personal interactions. Going **OUTDOORS** in a group, you get closer with people than at any other time. It's a really great bonding experience. You can talk really easily. It's really laid back. There's so much more of a comfort level, a free flow, than there is at a party.

When you run into someone on campus, so often it seems as if as soon as you start talking, there's something else they have to do. They need to be moving on soon. In the woods you know you won't be getting back to school for two days. You're in the moment, in the journey, as opposed to going toward some goal you may or may not reach. Philosophically, being goal-oriented is ultimately just being oriented toward the end goal—death. Every single step leads to death. The journey has to be as much if not more of the point than the goal you may or may not reach.



The Feast at St. John's Church

Lauren Williamson '07

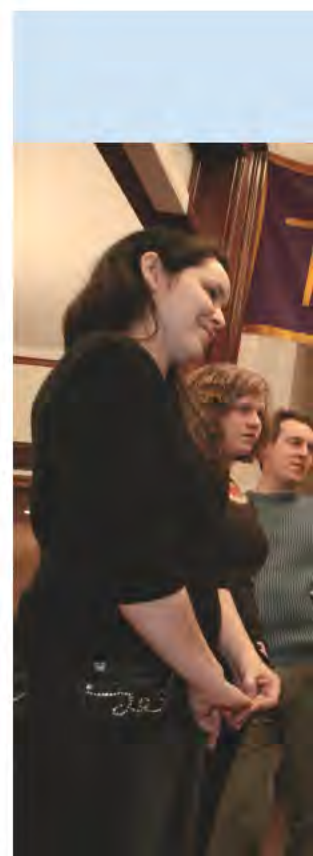
Psychology and Spanish major; co-coordinator, Peer Health; member, Students for Social Justice; Sunday School teacher; recently traveled to the Arizona-New Mexico border to study immigration issues

THE FEAST is a group is devoted to a conversation about progressive Christianity. It's about being faithful without marching through the structure and rubric established by traditional Christian denominations, about exploring a new way to be Christian that includes social justice, human rights and community concern.

Before the new student center opened, we met in the upper room of St. John's (Episcopal Church) Sundays at 6. We do dinner and a small service. The service always includes a poem, a piece of scripture, a prayer and a Celtic rune. Each week, one person also volunteers to "greet the stranger": One week someone might talk about migrants at the border. Another week, it might be about homeless people in Africa.

The Feast gives pause to my week. It's easy on a Sunday to spend the day meeting with study groups, writing a paper, getting ready for the week. The Feast is stopping and reflecting for a minimum of an hour-and-a-half—really pausing before I start again.

Why is it called "The Feast"? I think because it's for those who were hungry for something different and also because of scriptural references to the feast and to Jesus as the bread of life. It's tying all those things together to feed a hunger. It's not just sustenance. It fills people.



Mariama Massaquoi '07

Religion major, international studies concentration, pre-med; founder, Liberal Interfaith Experience (LIFE), a forum for students of various faiths to share their religious expressions and to discuss such questions as "Does God exist?" and "What is the meaning of suffering?" from a variety of religious perspectives

I decided when I came to Williams that I wanted to make sure that I stayed grounded and focused and didn't forget about my religion, so I joined the Muslim Student Union (MSU). It's more than a religious community. It's very much about being able to share and be open with my brothers and sisters about the challenges we go through, about having someone to understand the perspective you're coming from. We meet in the **MUSLIM PRAYER ROOM** every Saturday. On Fridays we pray here. Friday is a holy day.

It is quiet here, a good place to come study. You take off your shoes when you come into the room. There are prayer rugs, so you can just step over to them and pray. I feel comfortable here. Whoever comes in the room is going to be a smiling face I want to see.



Mariama Massaquoi in the Muslim Prayer Room

An ongoing list compiled by the Chaplain's Office of first-year **student religious affiliations** includes more than 60, including **Druze**, **Quaker** and **Sikh**.

Bryan Norton (center) in the Newman Room



Bryan Norton '07

Philosophy major; student leadership chair, Williams Catholic

I was raised Catholic, but I hadn't taken ownership of my faith. Coming here was a difficult adjustment. A lot of it was just homesickness. This place is different from the Catholic high school I went to. I got involved in this community, and the **NEWMAN ROOM** (in Thompson Chapel) really did become a home away from home. A lot of it is just virtuous, Christ-centered friendship. It's very beautiful to be able to share that faith with your peers.

This place is humming most hours of the night. Students can come here at any hour to do work, use the computers, use the kitchen. Non-Catholics use it too. The chapel is open 24 hours a day. It was a storage closet at one point and now it's a chapel that houses the Blessed Sacrament. At every mass, bread and wine become the body and blood of Jesus Christ—the Eucharist. The Eucharist reposes in the tabernacle. You need special permission from the bishop to have a tabernacle. It's the heart of the Catholic faith. When I go there, Jesus Christ is really, truly present. There'll be times when I leave the library at 2:30 a.m. and I'll stop there just to say good night to the Lord.



Hannah Gray (center) at the Jewish Religious Center

Hannah Gray '07

English and religion major; co-president, Williams College Jewish Association; member, crew team

I went to a Jewish day school and came from a really homogenous community of Jews. I wasn't sure to what extent I wanted to be religious at Williams. I got here on a Wednesday and found I couldn't wait to go to services on Friday. It was a comfort to have a place that is familiar in a place that is totally unfamiliar.

On Fridays, I show up at the **JEWISH RELIGIOUS CENTER** at 6. When you step across the threshold, it's warm, there's nice lighting and thick carpets. It's like being in a cozy library. And there are all the people you don't see much during the week. You have a few minutes to catch up with people and to slow down.

Students lead the service. I pay attention to the words. You sing along to the prayers you know. A lot of people have beautiful voices. I personally can't carry a tune, but I can hear and appreciate others' singing.

The service provides a structure for you to use in whatever way is necessary for you that week. You may end up thinking about something that happened that week that you haven't had time to sit down and think about. That's what the time is there for: reflection.

Kendell Newman '08

Political economy major; winner, 2006 Frank Newman Award for fostering campus community engagement; co-founder, North Adams community garden initiative; member, Lehman Council (overseeing service activities on campus), GreenSense (environmental activism), Students for Social Justice and Education Reform and Advocacy; volunteer, Caretaker Farm, Peace Valley Farm

It's important as a freshman to find your space—where you belong in your community. For me, that means connecting to the **COMMUNITY OUTSIDE CAMPUS**. It's important to have a life apart from campus because life on campus isn't always reflective of reality. It's easy to get caught up in work and the drama of relationships.

As a student involved in community work, going from one thing to the next, there's not a lot of reflection time. Some of the most sacred spaces are temporal: time in between when I do get the chance to reflect and think. Often those in-between times are driving to North Adams to the gardens. Driving in, I think, "I can't believe I'm doing this right now. I have to write two papers." Then I get there and I'm talking to people and having a good time and everything else seems so trivial. Driving back, going past Stop and Shop and the trailer park, I think, "There's nothing better I could have done with my afternoon." I can go back and know where I am. I'm not just this machine going from thing to thing to thing. Working in the community grounds me, and to me, that is sacred.

"In the woods . . . you're in the moment, in the journey, as opposed to going toward some goal you may or may not reach."

Nontombi Kraai '09

Possible Chinese major, Spent two years at Li Po Chun United World College in Hong Kong before coming to Williams

I love the **DANCE STUDIO**. In my culture (Botswana), you always dance at weddings. You don't choreograph, you just dance from the heart. When I took my first dance class last spring, on the Martha Graham technique, I found energies and strengths in my body that I never knew existed. The space had a lot to do with it. When you're there, nothing else matters. It's just you, the sky, the dancers, the drummers and the horizon. You're in sync with your spirit.

Especially with Kusika (a Williams African dance group), it's also the feeling of a family. You get there; you greet each other warmly. You start warming up, and in between, making jokes and laughing. You know you have work to do but you're in a relaxed state of mind. You can fully engage yourself, be wholly and completely yourself, and you can allow other people to be themselves.

Men Behaving Badly

by Zelda Stern

Does a decrease in the supply of men lead to an increase in the mistreatment of women?

"This is the hypothesis I really want to test," says Elizabeth Brainerd, Williams associate professor of economics. Over the past five years during summers and a sabbatical she has examined

the effects of lopsided sex ratios. An expert in population economics and the Russian economy, Brainerd studied census data on the generation of Russians that came of age during World War II. By the close of the conflict, Soviet military casualties in the war were

such that women of marriageable age outnumbered men three-to-two.

Sifting through a mass of unanalyzed data on the affected generation in Moscow archives, she found lower rates of marriage and reduced fertility rates, along with higher rates of out-of-wedlock births and of childlessness. Women of the affected cohort had more abortions, most likely because of greater pressures to have pre-marital and unprotected sex; there was also a higher death rate from abortions.

The data bore out a range of Brainerd's suppositions. "In a much

"WITH MORE
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MAKE THEMSELVES
ATTRACTIVE TO MATES."

Gabriel Amadeus Cooney

less competitive marriage market for males, men have a lot more outside options," she says. "They don't have to do as much to make themselves attractive to mates. They could be drinking more. There could be more domestic abuse."

All of which raises still more intriguing questions. "I want to find out how changes in sex ratio may affect women's bargaining power in their marriages and children's welfare," says Brainerd. "Research has shown that women tend to give a greater share of household resources to children than men do. But when women significantly outnumber men, they tend to get a smaller share of those resources to allocate."

The generation in which Russian women vastly outnumbered men is now in its eighties and rapidly dying off, but the effects of the unbalanced sex ratio linger.

"My hunch is that it may have contributed to a weakening of marriage as an institution that probably has been transmitted across generations," Brainerd concludes. She also sees the potential for similar changes in other countries that have been whiplashed by violent conflict, where the impact may be felt in future family formation.

"The costs are much bigger than you might think," says Brainerd. ■



Michael Morgenstern

A sampling of appearances by Williams professors outside the College's local news area, compiled by the office of Public Affairs. For a complete list, visit www.williams.edu/admin/news/inthenews/php.

"Schools are being compelled to spend more on student services, small class sizes, student centers, science centers and technology," said David Zimmerman, director of the Williams College Project on the Economics of Higher Education and Orrin Sage Professor of Political Economy, in a Jan. 31 *Newsday* article on soaring college costs in the face of competition among schools for the best students.

A Jan. 12 *Chronicle of Higher Education* essay titled "How Colleges Perpetuate Inequality" cited work conducted by Morty Schapiro, president and economics professor; Gordon Winston, economics professor, emeritus; and Catharine Hill '76, former economics professor and provost and now president of Vassar College, regarding access of lower income students to elite institutions.

"One of the things that the Iraqi insurgency and Saddam himself have been trying to do for the last year or so has been to build a whole narrative of Saddam's martyrdom," Marc Lynch told NPR's *On the Media*. In an interview broadcast Jan. 5 after Hussein's hanging, political science professor Lynch concluded, "What the timing actually does is to give a really powerful boost to that particular narrative."

An Op-ed appearing in the Dec. 21 *New York Times* and *International Herald Tribune* by Cluett Professor of Humanities Mark Taylor warned, "Unless we establish a genuine dialogue within and among all kinds of belief, ranging from religious fundamentalism to secular dogmatism, the conflicts of the future will probably be even more deadly."

"It would be good to have a steady stream of income that looks like three quarters of what I made when I was working," said William Gentry, economics professor, in a Nov. 3 *U.S. News & World Report* article titled "Should You Annuitize Your Retirement Savings?"

IN THE NEWS



"PERFUME HAS A MYSTERY TO IT BECAUSE IT IS SO VAPOROUS, BECAUSE IT DISAPPEARS. LIKE LIGHT OR SOUND WAVES, THERE'S SOMETHING VERY INSUBSTANTIAL ABOUT IT; THAT'S WHAT MAKES IT POETIC."

Scents and Sensibility

Richard Stamelman, who's retiring this summer after 14 years teaching comparative literature at Williams, discusses his latest book, *Perfume: Joy Obsession, Scandal, Sin: A Cultural History of Fragrance from 1750 to the Present* (Rizzoli, 2006), which grew out of a Winter Study course he taught in 1998.

Why perfume?

I've always been interested in 19th century French poetry and, in particular, in Baudelaire. Baudelaire tried to capture in words what it was to be carried on the wings of a fragrance. He's the greatest writer about perfume since the Song of Songs.

My previous book was about death and absence in French poetry. I decided I would

move to a less melancholy topic, but this book too is about loss. When you translate a poem into another language, something gets lost. The same is true when you try to translate perfume into language.

I had also become friends with a perfumer in Paris, the man who has invented all of the perfumes for Chanel since 1980. For him, perfume is the poetry of fashion. He enabled me to use the Chanel archives for research.

In your book you quote Rimmel: "The history of perfume is in some manner that of civilization." How so?

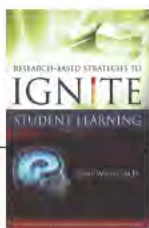
There is something about a material object that is part of everyday life that will reveal something about a cultural moment.

The object itself does not have cultural tentacles. What gives it meaning is the way individuals and society ascribe to that object a host of associations and beliefs.

One October day, I was out in a jasmine field in Grasse with a farmer who supplies some of the great perfume houses. The grower looked around his field, spread his arms wide and said, "Monsieur, when a man gives a woman a bottle of perfume, he gives her more than a bottle of perfume: he gives her an entire field."

That is one meaning of perfume: delight in the beauty of bountiful nature. But the man who gives a gift of perfume is also giving Frenchness: the colonialist, nationalist view that no one else could do this as well. He is giving love, but also seductiveness, transgressiveness. (In the 19th century, only women of questionable virtue put perfume on their bodies.) There is an erotic aspect, an amorous aspect. And then there is the repressed image of the hard, backbreaking labor it takes to create such beauty.

—Interviewed by Zeldia Stern ■



MORE FROM THE BOOKSHELF

The Ice Cave: A Woman's Adventures from the Mojave to the Antarctic. By Lucy Jane Bledsoe '79. University of Wisconsin Press, 2006. Essays on what it means to be a member of one species on our planet, based on the author's three trips to Antarctica.

Running Alone: Presidential Leadership from JFK to Bush II—Why It Has Failed and How We Can Fix It. By James MacGregor Burns '39, the Woodrow Wilson Professor of Government, emeritus. Basic Books, 2006. A review of George W. Bush's presidency in the context of half a century of presidential politics.

Holy Comfort. By C.R. Compton '78. Hilliard and Harris, 2006. A novel in which the investigation into the murder of a priest upsets the image of a distinguished church.

Protecting the Self: Defense Mechanisms in Action. By Phebe Cramer, professor of psychology. The Guilford Press, 2006. An examination of defense mechanisms and their role in both normal development and psychopathology.

Operation Homecoming: Iraq, Afghanistan, and the Home Front, in the Words of U.S. Troops and Their Families. Edited by Andrew Carroll. With an essay by Paul D. Danielson '88. Random House, 2006. A collection of eyewitness accounts, journals, stories and other writings about wartime experiences.

Buying Military Transformation: Technological Innovation and the Defense Industry. By Peter Dombrowski '85, et al. Columbia University Press, 2006. An analysis of the U.S. military's ongoing effort to capitalize on information technology.

Something That Will Surprise the World: The Essential Writings of the Founding Fathers. By Susan Dunn, professor of humanities. Basic Books, 2006. Important letters, speeches and essays of the Founding Fathers set in the historical context of their lives and times.

Hardy Cross: American Engineer. By Leonard K. Eaton '43. University of Illinois Press, 2006. A study of the life of a key figure in the history of structural engineering.

The Education of Ronald Reagan: The General Electric Years and the Untold Story of his Conversion to Conservatism. By Thomas W. Evans '52. Columbia University Press, 2007. How Reagan shifted from a New Deal liberal to an economic conservative as a result of his years affiliated with General Electric.

SPRING BREAK

The Faculty Lecture Series was founded in 1911 by Catherine Mariotti Pratt, a philosophy professor's wife who wished to relieve the tedium of long New England winters by hearing the "learned professors talk seriously about things that really mattered to them." Each spring, invited faculty members from every discipline hold forth on subjects ranging from cubism to chemistry to social psychology and Bruce Springsteen. This spring's offerings:

Knowing One's Mind, Joe Cruz '91, philosophy

Changing Images in the World of Art and Science, Paul Karabinos, geosciences

Russia's Demographic Crisis: Causes, Consequences and Questions, Elizabeth Brainerd, economics

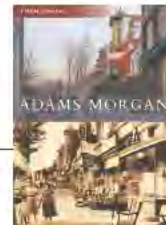
Everybody Knows about Mississippi: A Film Screening of *South of Ten* and *Some Thoughts about American Open Secrets*, Liza Johnson '92, art

Who's In? Who's Out? Who Cares?: Peer Relations and Adjustment in Childhood, Marlene Sandstrom, psychology

Democracy and Captivity: Narratives and Penal Culture, Joy James, political science and Africana studies



LIFE OF THE MIND



To Begin Again: A Novel of Love and War.

By Terence T. Finn '64. Ivy House Publishing, 2006. The military and romantic encounters of a Georgetown history professor recalled to the Air Force during the Korean War.

Liberal Arts Colleges in American Higher Education: Challenges and Opportunities.

With essays by Stephen Fix, Robert G. Scott '68 Professor of English; Francis Oakley, Williams president, emeritus, and Edward Dorr Griffin Professor of the History of Ideas, emeritus; David H. Porter, Harry C. Payne Visiting Professor of Liberal Arts; and Morton Owen Schapiro, Williams president and economics professor. American Council of Learned Societies, 2005. The proceedings of a conference on the future of liberal arts colleges.

Numbered Days: Diaries and the Holocaust

By Alexandra Garbarini '94. Yale University Press, 2006. The multiple roles played by diary writing in the lives of ordinary men and women as the terrors of the Holocaust unfolded.

Adams Morgan.

By Josh Gibson '94, et al. Arcadia Publishing, 2006. A photographic history of the development of a distinctly American neighborhood in Washington, D.C.

¡Perros! ¡Perros!/Dogs! Dogs! A Story in English and Spanish.

By Ginger Foglesong Guy. Illustrated by Sharon Glick '93. Greenwillow, 2006. A children's book uses dog breeds to explore the idea of opposites.

People Intoxicate Me: A Memoir.

By Margaret Thurston Holt. Edited and

with introduction by Thurston Holt '42.

Longfellow Books, 2006. A self-portrait that also paints a landscape of life in New England spanning the 20th century.

Conquering the SAT: How Parents Can Help Teens Overcome the Pressure and Succeed.

By Ned Johnson '93, et al. Palgrave Macmillan, 2006. A strategic guide designed to help families maximize their teenagers' performance on the Scholastic Aptitude test.

American Art and Architecture. By Michael J. Lewis, professor of art. Thames and Hudson Ltd., 2006. A broad survey of American art and architecture from its 17 century colonial origins to contemporary installation and video exhibits.

Printer's Devil: Mark Twain and the American Publishing Revolution. By Bruce Michelson '70. University of California Press, 2006. The technological revolution in printing and publishing's consequences on culture and personal identity, explored through Twain's best-known literary works.

Facial Features of French Explorers, Vol. I.

By Matthew Swanson '97. Illustrated by Robbi Behr '97. Idiots' Books, 2006. A humorous approach to the lives and images of historical French explorers.

Captive Histories: English, French, and Native Narratives of the 1704 Deerfield Raid.

Edited by Kevin Sweeney '72, et al. University of Massachusetts Press, 2006. An array of original sources tell the story of the 1704 French and Indian attack on Deerfield, Mass.

Ideals at Work: Education for World

Stewardship in the Round Square Schools.

By Peter Tacy '59. Deerfield Academy Press, 2006. A study of the Round Square model for education, which encourages personal development and responsibility through service, challenge, adventure and international understanding.

National Interest and International

Aviation.

By Erwin von den Steinen '55. Kluwer Law International, 2006. An in-depth exploration of the vital relationship between aviation policy and national interest in today's global economy.

High Performing Investment Teams: How to Achieve Best Practices of Top Firms.

By Jim Ware '76, et al. Wiley, 2006. How a money manager can build a lasting and successful culture that relies on teamwork.

Research-Based Strategies to Ignite Student Learning: Insights From A

Neurologist and Classroom Teacher.

By Judy Willis '71. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 2006. A comprehensive guide for improving student learning based on the author's neurology expertise and classroom experience.

ON CD

The Training Sequence EP. By The Monkeys (including Stu Warshawer '03, Phil Enock '05 and Jeremy Da '03). Self-produced, 2006. The debut CD from a New York City band responding to the recent wave of post-punk and guitar-based music.