FEATURES

50 YEARS AT THE CENTER

Looking back at moments of progress and peril in the Graduate Center’s first half century, adapted from Fifty Years at the Center: A History of the Graduate School and University Center of the City University of New York from 1961 to 2011.

ART OF 365

We pass it in the hallways, eat our lunch beneath it, and stop sometimes to marvel at the rich and varied collection of art that can be found throughout the Graduate Center, from Frank Stella’s vast mixed-media work that looms over the Dining Commons to the delicate Nancy Graves sculpture (on the cover) at the entrance to the president’s office.

WHAT WENT WRONG?

Peter Beinart’s interview with Nobel laureate economist and New York Times columnist Paul Krugman focuses on the Great Recession—how we got into it and why we still linger close by.

MIGHTIER THAN THE SWORD

This excerpt from the book by Distinguished Professor David S. Reynolds makes a powerful case for the pivotal role of Harriet Beecher Stowe and her book, Uncle Tom’s Cabin, in igniting the Civil War.
Milestone anniversaries, like the Graduate Center’s fiftieth, prompt a kind of double vision. We look back at events that shaped our past and look ahead to goals that will shape our future. As I reflect on our past half century, I’m struck by the prescience of people like Mina Rees, our founding president, and Albert Bowker, the CUNY chancellor whose vision has had such profound influence on the Graduate Center’s evolution.

One of the first issues Bowker faced when he took office was how CUNY’s new Ph.D. programs were to be organized. He recognized that, if political concerns were paramount, he should allow the CUNY colleges to become free-standing universities, each with a full set of doctoral programs. A seemingly more efficient route would concentrate each area of doctoral study at a different college by, for example, locating all foreign language and literature programs at Hunter College and all science programs at City College. This measure, however, would leave a scientist at Hunter without doctoral students and an English scholar at City in a similar position.

Happily, Bowker opted for a collaborative approach and adopted the consortium model that Mina Rees had introduced, two years earlier, at CUNY’s fledgling doctoral division. He called for a consortium in which the very best faculty from each of the CUNY colleges would come together and create a world-class doctoral faculty, significantly stronger than any individual college might produce.

As we hit the fifty-year mark, we celebrate the wisdom of this model of collaborative scholarship. Further, we extend it by mounting a new initiative we are calling the Advanced Research Collaborative. This effort will reformulate the Graduate Center’s mission as a hybrid enterprise. While we will continue to provide superb doctoral education, we will give equal emphasis to research, bringing scholars from the CUNY colleges to the Graduate Center to participate in seminars that will advance their work. We will engage postdoctoral fellows from throughout the world in this initiative, create a robust visiting faculty program, and fund fellowships for advanced students.

As we take the Graduate Center in this new direction, we will be extending the vision of Albert Bowker, who recognized the critical influence of research in the life of a university. We will create the ground for scholarship that not only will move the Graduate Center and CUNY forward but will also address the challenges that the world will face in the next fifty years.

William P. Kelly
President
The Graduate Center
A World of Music at GC, with New Music from Throughout the World

The Graduate Center continues to thrive as a musical hub with a wide variety of free or low-cost concerts for music fans. These events, in the acoustically rich Elebash Recital Hall, bring attention to the D.M.A./Ph.D. program in music, which prepares students for many fields and subfields of music scholarship and performance.

The midday Music in Midtown series, organized in 2007 by Associate Professor Norman Carey, director of the Doctor of Musical Arts (D.M.A.) program in performance, offered an exciting schedule of concerts. The spring lineup featured, among others, composer/pianist John Musto and soprano Amy Burton, whose program included a selection of Musto’s songs; violinist Heesun Shin, who joined other chamber musicians in the D.M.A. program, playing works by Beethoven and Janáček; and the Prometheus Chamber Ensemble, featuring violinist Eric Lewis and pianist Norman Carey playing Brahms.

The CUNY Middle Eastern Ensemble (MEE), established in 2008 under the direction of Ozan Aksoy, ended the spring season with a concert of Middle Eastern folk music and song, which ended up with at least one audience member dancing on stage. The musicians included graduate students in ethnomusicology, composition, jazz performance, comparative literature, physics, Middle Eastern studies, and history; members of the faculty in computer sciences, music, and anthropology; and one professional musician. Also frequently performing in Elebash Recital Hall are the CUNY Contemporary Music Ensemble (CME), the NYC Al-Andalus Ensemble, and the GC Composers’ Alliance.

A highlight of the fall was “The Songs of Richard Hundley: A Celebration,” with a cast of D.M.A. singers performing works of the renowned composer.

Live@365, a public program devoted to new forms of world music that was introduced this fall, draws attention to the ethnomusicology concentration within the Graduate Center’s doctoral program in music. Curated by Isabel Soffer, the former programming director of the World Music Institute, the inaugural season of six Live@365 events features celebrated musicians from Africa, Australasia, Europe, and the Middle East.

In an unusual concert on September 27, Malian musician Ballaké Sissoko on the kora, a twenty-one-string lute-harp, partnered with French musician Vincent Segal on the cello. Similarly, on October 18, singer and guitarist António Zambujo provided a thrilling evening of fado, the most widely recognized music of Portugal. His voice expressed an astonishing range of darker emotions—loneliness, melancholy, longing for a lost past—but in this “new voice of fado,” there was also some humor and joy, especially in the interplay with the three string players accompanying him on his U.S. debut tour: Ricardo Cruz on the double bass, Luis Guerreiro on the twelve-string Portuguese guitar, and Jon Luz on the cavaquinho, a small four-stringed instrument in the guitar family.

Fado has had a fascinating trajectory from the fifteenth century to its present-day form. According to Philip Van Vleck in NatGeo Music, fado “is first and foremost music for voice and guitar” and its “thematic soul” lies in poetry that dates to the fifteenth century and the writings of Luis Vaz de Camões, often regarded as the greatest poet in the Portuguese language. Also vital to its formation are the modinha, or sentimental love song, and North African and Brazilian instrumentation and dance music. The twelve-string Portuguese guitar, which is integral to fado, evolved from an African lute carried by Congolese slaves to Brazil in the fifteenth century; the instrument then made a return trip to Portugal in somewhat altered form. In another case of reverse migration, Brazilian immigrants influenced fado’s development when they brought African dance music, especially the fofo and lundu, to Portugal in the early 1800s. Fado’s popularity was widespread among Lisbon’s urban poor in the nineteenth century, while the bourgeoisie thought it disreputable, like the tango. How times have changed!

—JEH
Segal Theatre Center’s Prelude.11: First Look at Theatre’s Avant-Garde

Every year since 2003, the Martin E. Segal Theatre Center (MESTC) has hosted a festival celebrating upcoming experimental work by New York City’s theatrical artists and companies. Now a highly anticipated prologue to the fall season of avant-garde theatre, the festival, which lasts three or four days, draws large and deeply involved audiences, mostly fellow artists and performers eager to question participants about their latest works.

What distinguished the eighth annual festival, on October 12–14, which included experimental theatre production, visual art performance, and new trends in poetry and contemporary dance, was the interdisciplinary perspective that shaped discussion of its live performances. Another unique aspect was the effect on the audiences of using two differing venues for the festival’s performances. One was the James Gallery, a white space, where movable white polystyrene foam seating provides a view of the metropolis and passersby through windows along Fifth Avenue and 35th Street. This ambiance contrasts strongly with the second venue, the windowless Martin E. Segal Theatre, which has black and metallic movable chairs, beautiful wood-paneled walls, bright stage lighting, and a built-in screen and sound booth.

PRELUDE.11’s cross-disciplinary nature reflected the orientation of this year’s four curators: Claire Bishop, a Graduate Center professor of art history; actor, writer, and director Rob Marcado; theatre critic Helen Shaw; and MESTC’s executive director, Dr. Frank Hentschker. In their months of planning, they noted, “we’ve discovered cultural and pragmatic differences that divide these related disciplines, but we’ve also been happy to uncover the extent to which different mediums frequently address similar issues.”

Panel discussions highlighted a different issue on each day of the festival. On day one, “Repurposing” acknowledged the extent to which many artists now either restage recent works, or scavenge from their own back catalogue, or revisit “avant-gardisms” of the past. Representative artists in this category included Michael Blake, who portrayed a dancer trying to remember every move he ever learned, in chronological order; and Jay Scheib’s multimedia World of Wires, inspired by Daniel Galouye’s Simulacron-3 and Fassbinder’s Welt am Draht, in which the fiction of a computer simulation becomes indistinguishable from reality.

Day two’s theme was “Text as Texture,” a nod to the way modern artists play with words, eliding the sense-meaning relationship via technological wizardry, poetic mischief, or other means. Works in the category included A Supposedly Fun Thing I’ll Never Do Again, directed by Daniel Fish; Love.abz, written by New York/Helsinki theatre artist Otso Huopaniemi; Ich, Kürbisgeist, written by Sibyl Kempson and presented by the Big Dance Theater; and Muazzez, an adaptation of a Mac Wellman story acted by Steve Mellor.

The creative coupling of artist Suzanne Boca-negra with actor-director Paul Lazar in When a Priest Marries a Witch fell under the third theme, “We Present a Presentation,” which also looked at the more self-conscious modes of presentation and performance that have become prevalent among artists: academic presentations delivered as performance, performances that incorporate the trappings of academic presentation, and performances within performances.

Homing in on a place where all three themes converge, cocurator Helen Shaw remarked, “When we either push or scramble something we think we understand, or take something innate to us and short-circuit it, that is the pleasure of art. That art is the only way to construct social truth—because art can short-circuit things that are so hard-wired in us.”

—JEH

The wall comes tumbling into reality in Jay Scheib’s multimedia World of Wires, the final installment of his Simulated Cities/Simulated System trilogy, in which reality has become impossible to tell from the fiction of the computer simulations (above left).
Marking a Landmark Moment for Philosophy: Publication of Saul Kripke’s Papers

The renowned philosopher and logician Saul Kripke (Dist. Prof., GC, Philosophy) made a rare public appearance to participate in a two-day conference in September, sponsored by the Saul Kripke Center, to mark the publication of his Philosophical Troubles: Collected Papers, Volume 1 (Oxford University Press, 2011).

The book contains a number of Kripke’s previously published essays, widely held to have changed the landscape of twentieth-century philosophy, together with previously unpublished material. Some of the unpublished material has been discussed for years and, while transcriptions and notes have occasionally surfaced, no authoritative text existed. This material surfaced in the process of organizing the Kripke Center’s archives, which include recordings of lectures and seminars, lecture notes, manuscripts, and philosophical and mathematical correspondence dating back to the 1950s. Gary Oster tag, GC associate professor of philosophy and director of the Kripke Center, heads the transcription effort and is creating a digital archive of the center’s holdings. One gem discovered in the archive was a reel-to-reel tape of the lectures on which was based Kripke’s book Naming and Necessity, widely considered one of the most important philosophical works of the twentieth century. The digital version of the recording will be part of a new edition of that work, to coincide with the fortieth anniversary of its initial publication.

CUNY Chancellor Matthew Goldstein started the celebration by welcoming the large gathering of philosophical authorities, professors, and doctoral students eager to see and hear from Kripke and learn about the new publication. Kripke began gaining notoriety in the field while a high school student in Nebraska, when he wrote the first in a series of papers that transformed logic and remain canonical works in the field. In his opening remarks, Chancellor Goldstein recalled how he, as a City College undergraduate in the early 1960s, had first heard of the wunderkind responsible for these formidable results. After high school, Kripke entered Harvard University, where he became a junior fellow in his sophomore year; while still an undergraduate, he gave lectures to graduate students at MIT. During the 1960s, Kripke developed a revolutionary theory of reference in lectures and seminars at various universities, culminating in lectures delivered at Princeton University in 1970 and subsequently published as Naming and Necessity. This work sparked a veritable industry of philosophical commentary and criticism, as did his 1982 book, Wittgenstein on Rules and Private Language—a work widely thought to have changed the course of Wittgenstein scholarship. In 2001, Kripke won the Schock Prize in Logic and Philosophy, which is given by the Swedish Academy of Sciences and is the equivalent in its field of a Nobel Prize. Prior to arriving at the Graduate Center in 2002, he was McCosh Professor of Philosophy at Princeton University, where he is now professor emeritus; he also served on the faculty of Rockefeller University, was John Locke Lecturer at Oxford, and was A. D. White Professor-at-Large at Cornell.

Joining the discussions on the newer material in Philosophical Troubles were distinguished philosophers from the Graduate Center, which boasts one of the strongest U.S. doctoral programs in the field, and from across the United States and abroad. Among them were Karen Bennett (Cornell), Phillip Bricker (University of Massachusetts–Amherst), Elizabeth Camp (University of Pennsylvania), David Chalmers (Australian National University/NYU), Keith DeRose (Yale), Michael Devitt (GC), Mircea Dumitru (University of Bucharest), Stephen Neale (GC), Christopher Peacocke (Columbia), Graham Priest (GC), Nathan Salmon (UCSB/GC), Ernest Sosa (Rutgers), and Stephen Yablo (MIT).

In one exciting presentation, “Kripke on Frege on Sense and Reference,” Chalmers highlighted Kripke’s analysis of the German mathematician, logician, and philosopher Gottlob Frege’s highly influential theory of sense and reference. Among the questions Chalmers addressed were how words refer to objects or individuals, what the relationship is between a word and its meaning, and how the time of utterance is incorporated into a sentence’s meaning.

At the conclusion of his presentation, Chalmers put into words what many of Kripke’s colleagues felt: “It’s an honor to pay tribute to someone who has—for me and for so many other people in philosophy—been an influence and an inspiration.”

For more information on the Saul Kripke Center and upcoming events, visit: http://web.gc.cuny.edu/kripkecenter/.

—Rachel Ramírez

Learning How Emancipation Was Under Way Before Lincoln’s Proclamation

To James Oakes (Dist. Prof., History), a leading authority on our sixteenth President, there may be no document in American history more subject to myth-making than Abraham Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation. What did it do? What was it supposed to do? And why did Lincoln wait more than twenty months after the Civil War began before he signed it into law?

On July 19, in a lecture to GC members, Oakes shared for the first time his own answers to these and related questions. His conclusions will be the focus of his next book, a history of emancipation during the Civil War.

There was never any doubt, maintains Oakes, that Lincoln would eventually issue the proclamation, thus freeing slaves in the rebellious states. Less certain was when this should occur. Lincoln’s Secretary of State William Seward urged the President to wait for signs of a Union Army victory. Otherwise, he argued, the executive order might be perceived as an act of desperation rather than one of triumph. So, with a heavy heart, Lincoln sat tight, not issuing the preliminary proclamation until September 22, 1862, five days after victory at Antietam.

While many of his contemporaries, including essayist and staunch abolitionist Ralph Waldo Emerson, commended the President on his timing, others, including Horace Greeley, the influential editor of the New York Tribune, accused Lincoln of procrastinating for political reasons. Oakes subscribes to neither view. “Both Emerson and Greeley erased the context in which the question of the proclamation was asked,” asserted Oakes, ticking off a litany of actions Lincoln had already taken in his quest to free the slaves by the time the proclamation was issued. “If you want to know what the proclamation did,” he added, “you need to know what had been done before.” This, as he described the actions Lincoln took shortly after the war
began, proved to be considerable, and, before the Emancipation Proclamation was signed, slaves were being freed in every major area occupied by the Union Army.

Oakes’s last book, The Radical and the Republican: Frederick Douglass, Abraham Lincoln, and the Triumph of Abolitionary Politics, analyzed the careers of the wartime President and the nation’s most important black leader. In 2008, it was a cowinner of the Lincoln Prize, one of the most prestigious awards in the field of American history.

For information on how to become a GC member, see http://www.gc.cuny.edu/Membership-Support/Become-a-GC-Member.

—Jackie Glasthal

Cartoons That Pass Along the Spirit of Yiddishkeit

Amid much kibitzing (Yiddish for gossiping) and schmoozing (charting), Paul Buhle was kvelling (glowing with pride) on October 5 when the GC’s Gotham Center for New York City History and the Center for Jewish Studies hosted a forum celebrating the publication of Yiddishkeit: Jewish Vernacular & the New Land, a new anthology coedited by Buhle and Harvey Pekar, the late underground comic book writer, music critic, and media personality best known for his autobiographical American Splendor comic series.

“Harvey’s dream was to make comics do what any great literature can do,” Buhle explained when he took the microphone. Moreover, Harvey never lost touch with his essential Jewishness. “He retained his sense of Yiddishkeit,” said Buhle, “even when he’d lost much of the language, but he never found a way to give expression to it in comics—until this book.”

In addition to Buhle and Pekar, twenty-plus contemporary writers, historians, graphic artists, illustrators, and cartoonists contributed to the anthology, including Dan Archer, David Lasky, Spain Rodriguez, Sharon Rudahl, and Joel Schechter. Also helping to give it structure and historical context are cartoons and illustrations from Yiddish newspapers and magazines from the early part of the twentieth century, such as Der Groiter Kandes, a Yiddish counterpart to the British Punch. Much of the book’s art takes the form of the graphic novel, either in color or black and white. Together the many different pieces that make up the anthology provide a lively history of the Yiddish language and culture, from Sholem Aleichem’s stories of shtetl (village) life to the wacky humor and comic art of Harvey Kurtzman in Mad magazine.

While the panelists agreed that “you don’t have to be Jewish” to appreciate the joys of this German-based language—after all, the average New Yorker knows the meaning of words like noob, shmooze, and shniute—the mavens (experts or know-it-alls) were quick to point out that a deeper knowledge of Yiddish does help one appreciate what an incredibly expressive language it can be. Performers Allen Lewis Rickman and his wife Yelena Shmulenson, for example, rattled off dozens of ways to say “imbecile” in Yiddish (including shmendrik, kuni-leml, and yold) as they acted out an excerpt from The Essence: A Yiddish Theatre Dim Sum, their performance piece reproduced in forty pages of the book. And Jeff Newelt, Pekar’s editor on many comic projects, entertained the audience with an interpretive reading of Pekar’s “Pa-ayer-Reggs!” which uses very colorful Yiddish to tell a story about old rag peddlers in Cleveland, Ohio.

Comic book artists Sabrina Jones, a contributor to many newspapers and magazines, including the New York Times, and founder of Girltalk, and Danny Fingeroth of Marvel Comics were on hand to talk about their contributions to the anthology. So too were Lawrence Bush, editor of Jewish Currents, a secular Jewish quarterly magazine, founded in 1946, and Aaron Lansky, founder of the National Yiddish Book Center, a cultural institution dedicated to preserving written works in Yiddish.

In 2002, Lansky’s National Yiddish Book Center launched the Steven Spielberg Digital Yiddish Library, an online bookstore that makes available via the Internet more than 12,000 out-of-print Yiddish titles. “Once almost extinct,” Lansky declared, “Yiddish is now the most accessible literary resource online.”

—Jackie Glasthal

Curators for Our Times, Caring for Context as Well as Collections

Today, when contemporary art museums are as eclectic and experimental as the works they display, curators had best know as much—and care as much—about how and where art is displayed as they do about the art itself. This was the key message of “The Now Museum: Contemporary Art, Curating Histories, Alternative Models,” the March conference organized by the GC’s Ph.D. Program in Art History, and cosponsored by Independent Curators International (ICI) and the New Museum, Manhattan’s only museum dedicated exclusively to contemporary art.

“This was a great opportunity for our doctoral students in art history to hear the most innovative practitioners from the museum world and art history in dialogue,” declared Claire Bishop (Assoc. Prof., GC, Art History), who chaired the conference. “Many of them wish to pursue careers in curating, and this conference offered a much-needed overview of major international developments in contemporary museums.”

The conference addressed such basic questions as: What does the museum stand for now? When did the sources of curatorial activity that we consider to be “contemporary” emerge, and where? How does globalization become internalized in both works of art and museum practices? Does the distinction between modern and contemporary art hold up in a global context?

Discussion of these topics made clear that today’s museums are no longer simply public spaces used to exhibit art. Richard Armstrong, director of the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, explained, for example, how the Guggenheim’s controversial Abu Dhabi museum was envisaged as a site where a cultural exchange about contemporary art could take place while respecting the emirate’s Islamic heritage. South African curator and artist Gabi Ngcobo spoke about Johannesburg’s Center for Historical Reenactments, where artists are encouraged to use their work to explore the relationship between art and history. And Annie Fletcher, curator of the small Netherlands-based Van Abbeemuseum, one of Europe’s first public museums for contemporary art, described strategies that facilitate “encounters” between visitors and objects from the museum’s collection.

The March conference was one of many opportunities GC students have to engage with the art world and ultimately help to shape its future, Bishop declared. Students here not only have access to such institutions as the New Museum and the ICI, plus a rapidly growing digital database containing more than a half-million searchable im-
ages, but, starting next fall, they will also benefit from a three-year pilot project titled “New Initiatives in Curatorial Training,” funded by a grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

“This award recognizes our success in training museum professionals, as well as gallery and auction-house personnel, and makes it possible to create formal links to New York institutions with which we have worked informally over the course of years,” said Kevin Murphy, executive officer of the art history program. “The grant will make it possible for us to offer our students exciting experiences working directly with objects in museums and galleries, complementing their studies here at the Graduate Center.”

The project, designed to strengthen curatorial training in the established fields of European and North American art, as well as in the emerging areas of African, Asian, Latin American, pre-Columbian, and contemporary art, addresses the need for more focused curatorial training through graduate seminars and a yearlong seminar on curatorial practice culminating in a student-curated exhibition.

“Since the founding of the GC’s Ph.D. Program in Art History about thirty years ago,” said Murphy, “it has produced many scholars who have gone on to great careers as curators and museum directors. The analysis and interpretation of objects is at the center of the discipline of art history, and the Mellon Foundation award will provide new opportunities for the direct study of works of art and architecture.”

For more information about the GC’s Ph.D. Program in Art History and what it has to offer, see http://web.gc.cuny.edu/dep/arthist/.

—Jackie Glasthal

The Science of Sweets: Giving Dessert Shape, Structure, and Texture

What makes the mousse melt in your mouth or turns apple juice from liquid to a cluster of chewy little golden globes? These questions and other conundrums of culinary science were addressed by Bill Yosses, White House executive pastry chef, and Amy Rowat, a UCLA professor of physics, biology, and physiology, on March 28 at “The Science of Sweets,” a program of the Graduate Center’s Initiative for the Theoretical Sciences.

Before Yosses whipped up some desserts on the stage of Proshansky Auditorium, Rowat gave the audience a crash course in soft matter science, a field of physics that examines the properties of what physicists call “easily deformed materials.” Desserts are great examples, said Rowat, because they’re formed and given shape, on the mesoscopic level (measured in microns), by a complex scaffold of “bubbles, droplets, or networks of proteins that are larger than molecules but smaller than a whole dessert.” It’s these soft matter properties, she explained, that produce the “textures of our favorite desserts.”

Whipped cream and beaten egg whites are basic food foams, and they’re central to such dessert components as meringues. The science of this, explained Rowat, is how air on the surface of these fluffy foams is trapped in liquid and forms tightly packed, microscopic bubbles that “suddenly behave like a solid and maintain the dessert’s shape.” Add some gelatin, and you’ll get the solid, spongy texture of marshmallow.

The science of another culinary favorite allows one to turn liquids into caviar-like spheres. It’s not magic. The process is called spherification—a technique pioneered by Ferran Adrià at his restaurant El Bulli in Spain—and more is required than whipping egg whites. Yosses spherified mango puree in a mixture of calcium chloride (salts) and alginate (polymer molecules from seaweed). The chemical reaction between these ingredients created chewable orbs with flavorful liquids inside.

“It’s amazing,” said Yosses, “that the human body can experience these very small structures ... when you eat something like a chocolate ganache or one of the desserts we’re about to make, your mouth is so incredibly sensitive not only to taste and aroma but also to touch.” Receptors in the mouth allow people to tell the difference between a poorly or perfectly made dessert even on the mesoscopic level.

At the end of their presentation, Rowat and Yosses invited audience members to try some of their no-fat chocolate mousse. For those who missed out, here’s the recipe for this flavorful sweet:

No eggs, no cream: pure chocolate mousse

Ingredients:
- Water
- Gelatin sheets (see www.nycake.com)
- Dark chocolate

1. Boil 1 cup of water and remove from heat.
2. Add 5 oz. of dark chocolate into boiling water. Allow the chocolate to melt.
3. Combine melted chocolate with two sheets/leaves of gelatin.
4. Mix gelatin and chocolate until they have the consistency of thick chocolate milk. Blend using an immersion blender.
5. Pour the mixture into a bowl and place over ice. Continue to blend until the chocolate is a light brown or chestnut color.
6. Allow the chocolate to crystallize as it cools over ice.
7. When the chocolate has set, enjoy a smooth, dairy-free chocolate mousse!

Try it! It’s to die for!

—Rachel Ramírez
Celebrating our fiftieth anniversary with a look back at moments of progress and peril, adapted from Fifty Years at the Center: A History of the Graduate School and University Center of the City University of New York from 1961 to 2011.

Starting with Nothing

The Graduate Division of the City University of New York began operations on September 1, 1961. It started on a wish and a prayer, without its own campus or its own faculty. The entire domain of the first dean of graduate studies, Mina Rees, an alumna of Hunter College and most recently its dean of faculty, was an office in the administrative headquarters of the Board of Higher Education. “No secretary,” Rees later recalled. “Nothing!”

To make it work, Rees borrowed the consortium method used in British universities. Instead of a separate faculty, she selected faculty from the four senior colleges; instead of a separate campus, classes were held throughout the CUNY system—all coordinated by Rees in the central office. Thus, in the fall of 1962, eighty-eight students began taking classes in four disciplines: economics, English, chemistry, and psychology.

By 1968, enrollment totaled 1,441, and eighty Ph.D.s had been granted. “The quality of educational performance in the Graduate Division compares favorably with that in similar American graduate institutions,” the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools marveled. “To have reached this level of quality within the short space of four years [sic] strikes the committee as a remarkable achievement.”

An Administrative Nightmare

For the first decade, consortium was, as Mina Rees recalled, “a work in progress.” Coordination was unwieldy. Although the offices of the Graduate Center were located in midtown Manhattan, first-year coursework was scattered throughout the senior colleges; at one point, students in eighteen disciplines were enrolled in fifty-six programs across the university because of duplication among the colleges. Record-keeping at the colleges’ four admissions offices was inconsistent. The State Department of Education criticized the school’s governance as “complicated, cumbersome, and loaded with friction points.”

The obvious solution was greater centralization. Space for administrative offices and classrooms was rented at 33 West 42nd Street. Thus was born the Graduate School and University Center.

A Lifeboat Environment

The Graduate Center faced a mortal threat in the mid-seventies. After New York City’s municipal government ran out of money in April 1975, city taxes were raised, municipal workers were laid off, wage increases were canceled, and fees for city services were hiked. CUNY’s $650 million budget had been cut by $20 million in the middle of the 1974–75 academic year, only to be reduced another 11 percent the next year. The number of courses offered at the Graduate Center was reduced by 10 percent, and faculty teaching loads were increased. Employees went unpaid for two weeks in 1976. For five years the Graduate Center was prohibited from replacing retired or transferred faculty members. No new doctoral programs were allowed until 1981.

As desperation grew, government officials and competing college administrators argued that CUNY had no business granting Ph.D.s at all, and that the Graduate Center should be closed. Administrators and faculty members vigorously rebutted these assertions, none more eloquently than the GC’s most famous professor, the historian Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr.

“A good graduate school provides the best way of assuring high academic and intellectual standards,” he wrote in the New York Times. “Without a graduate school, it would become almost impossible to maintain adequate standards in a large and diffuse educational system.”

Security and Growth

When New York City achieved a precarious but workable financial equilibrium in the eighties, the Graduate Center was able to stop looking over its shoulder. The moratorium previously imposed on new doctoral programs was lifted, and the GC moved rapidly to make up lost ground. A doctoral program in criminal justice was inaugurated in 1981, earth and environmental sciences two years later, with computer science, classics, and musical arts in performance following closely. A survey by the Conference Board of Associated Research Councils in 1983 ranked six of the Graduate Center’s programs (anthropology, English, French,
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history, linguistics, and music) among the fifteen best such programs in the country.

The long period of storm and stress, and subsequent growth, marked the tenure of the GC’s second president, Harold M. Proshansky, who served from 1972 to 1990. During his years in office, the GC awarded more than four thousand doctoral degrees and attracted more than $100 million in research funds. At a memorial service following his death in 1990, CUNY’s chancellor, W. Ann Reynolds, proclaimed:

“As you walk down the corridors, or peek into the classrooms, or look at the faces of students from around the world, or read the roster of world-class faculty, realize what you are doing. You are gazing at Harold Proshansky’s living monument.”

Miracle on 42nd Street

After renting two and a half floors at 33 West 42nd Street, Mina Rees decided in 1965 to seek purchase of the entire eighteen-story building and give the Graduate Center a true campus of its own. The building, whose ground floor contained an F. W. Woolworth five-and-dime store, was more famously remembered as the former site of Aeolian Hall, the concert venue that had hosted the 1924 premiere of George Gershwin’s Rhapsody in Blue.

The GC’s Assistant Dean J. Marilyn Mikulsky, working with architects Carl Petrilli and Samuel DeSanto, transformed the building into a modern university center, featuring a basement auditorium; a library that occupied three floors; a computer and statistical center; laboratories in anthropology, psychology, guidance and school counseling, and speech pathology and audiology; and a closed-circuit television system.

Calling the renovation “a lesson to architects, urbanists and educators,” the famously censorious New York Times architecture critic Ada Louise Huxtable praised the $9 million project as “an exemplary blend of economic considerations and good architectural judgment.”

“The existence of this central facility and the wise use that has been made of it have moved the doctoral program ahead at a pace that would have been impossible without it,” the Middle States Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools said, calling the Graduate Center “the miracle on 42nd Street.”

Our New Home

By the end of the eighties, the Graduate Center was again suffering from success. Enrollment had increased 40 percent since 1972, but no new classrooms had been added. Typically, four faculty members shared one office with a single phone and two desks. Relocation was the pressing task facing the GC’s third president, Frances Degen Horowitz, who took office in 1991.

The solution was a landmark building located on Fifth Avenue between 34th and 35th streets. A $16 million conversion, designed by Gwathmey Siegel & Associates, increased the GC’s space by about one-third, adding 480,000 square feet over eight floors. The new Mina Rees library—72,000 square feet on three floors—boosted shelf space by one-third. Seventy classrooms and an expansive computer center were added, as well as the James Gallery, the Baisley Powell

Elebash Recital Hall, the Martin E. Segal Theatre Center, and the Harold M. Proshansky Auditorium.

Preserved were such historic elements of the landmarked structure as the French limestone exterior, vaulted display windows, and the curving Art Nouveau metal and glass canopies above the entrances, and inside, the cast-iron staircases and the original bronze-sheathed elevator cab and shaft.

Thus was the B. Altman department store, the longtime preferred shopping venue for the carriage trade, converted into a state-of-the-art graduate school. “People will still shop in this building,” Horowitz said, “but now they will shop for ideas.”

A New Century

The twenty-first century has seen an increase in core faculty at the Graduate Center from 106 to 150, the tripling of student financial aid, and the opening of an eight-story residence hall with apartments for students and faculty.

The driving force behind these initiatives was the GC’s fourth president, William P. Kelly, who succeeded Frances Degen Horowitz in 2005. Pursuing his commitment to intellectual synthesis as the bedrock of higher education, Kelly secured a $2.4 million grant from the Mellon Foundation to fund part of a five-year project for “renewal and interdisciplinary innovation in the humanities and the humanistic social sciences.” This project, developed by Kelly and Provost Chase Robinson, aims at developing a new model for graduate education—in effect, a consortium of scholars pooling their energies to address consequential questions. They envisioned cohorts of senior and junior faculty meeting with doctoral candidates and postdoctoral fellows in a variety of forums—seminars, workshops, conferences, public programs—to focus their research on three major concerns: religion, science, and social change.

“There’s nothing to be gained by duplicating the work of other graduate schools,” Kelly says. “The Graduate Center must continually reinvent itself.”
Beyond its designated display venues—the James Gallery and Exhibition Hallway—there is art to be found throughout 365 Fifth Avenue. It ranges from Frank Stella’s vast mixed-media work *Dove of Tanna*, looming over the Dining Commons, to the delicate Nancy Graves sculpture *Howling and Hissing* (on the cover) that catches the eye of visitors to the president’s office. It is a rich and varied collection, reflecting the taste, talent, and generosity of the many artists, friends, donors, faculty members, and institutions that have contributed or lent works to the Graduate Center’s collection.

Almost as soon as the Graduate Center had a home of its own, it opened the site to art and artists. Once the other academic departments had settled into the newly renovated building at 33 West 42nd Street, they were joined, in 1971, by a doctoral program in art history. Earlier, a decision had been made to break through the ground floor to create an open-air mall connecting 42nd and 43rd Streets, a move the *New York Times*’ acerbic architecture critic Ada Louise Huxtable called “a small environmental miracle.” Within a year of its opening the GC mall was hosting art exhibitions for the passing public.

Two early gifts to the GC collection came from Vietnamese painter Tran Tho, first to exhibit at the street-level gallery. Second to exhibit there was Ray Ring, who became the GC’s director of building design and exhibitions and custodian of the GC collection. During the years that followed, the collection grew, mostly with gifts from artists whose works were displayed there and from CUNY faculty. Among the latter, Ursula Meyer, CUNY professor of sculpture, contributed works in ceramics, metal, and wood in the 1970s, and two of her largest pieces held permanent places in the mall gallery.

When the Graduate Center moved to 365 Fifth in 1999, so did the collection. An art gallery opened there the following year and mounted its first show in 2001. There have since been more than fifty exhibitions at what is now the James Gallery, with shows that stretch broadly across the expanding spectrum of the visual arts. At 365, the collection has continued to grow, and there are now more than one hundred works displayed in the building, as well as several hundred drawings, prints, and other works on paper.

In addition to the works shown in this issue, *Folio* plans to continue covering “Art of 365,” featuring other works from the collection, in future issues.

—ISM

*Principal photography by Richard Alcorn*
DOVE OF TANNA

Aply called monumental, Dove of Tanna, Frank Stella’s fiercely exuberant work in mixed media on aluminum, stretches nineteen feet across the east wall of the Dining Commons. Weighing 3,500 pounds—a shade heavier than a Lexus sedan—it is suspended from I beams that support the Commons’ skylight.

Monumental, as well, is the difference between the Dove and the artist’s earliest work. Stella, who first gained prominence on the art scene as the quintessential minimalist, produced hard-edged paintings in the sixties, marked by rigid shapes, parallel lines, and a stark palate. By the late seventies, however, when he created the Dove and the rest of the Exotic Bird series, his work had become more elaborate, with curving forms and vibrant colors. Moreover, the artist who once said a picture was “a flat surface with paint on it—nothing more” had brought relief into his work and created a Dove that is fully three-dimensional.

A gift to the Whitney Museum of American Art by the family of Victor W. Ganz in his memory, Dove of Tanna was on display at the Whitney’s branch museum in Stamford, Connecticut, until it was closed in 2001. Lacking another site with adequate space for the work, the Whitney had the Dove dismantled and put in storage.

At that time, students of a Whitney independent study program, preparing to become curators, were gaining experience at the Graduate Center’s art gallery. When it was learned that there was a home with room for the Dove at the school, a ten-year loan—recently renewed—was arranged. The challenge became moving the work, then housed in twelve separate pieces at a Long Island City warehouse, to 365 Fifth Avenue and mounting it in the Commons.

A structural engineer’s study determined that the steel framework supporting the Commons’ east wall could not hold the load, which would have to hang from the ceiling I beams. A rigging team with at least a dozen members brought the Dove to the Graduate Center and the pieces were laid out in the empty Commons, which had been cleared and closed for the weeklong installation. When the Dove was assembled, it was moved to the wall, where scaffolds had been erected. Cables were attached and the work was raised inch by inch to where it hangs today.
Displayed beneath the glass ceiling of the Skylight Room is Will My Soul Pass Through the Southland by Larry Poons, a painter whose early works featured circles or ovals against solid backgrounds, often brilliantly colored. In his later looser and more painterly works, like this one, he incorporates a variety of media to add texture to the paintings.

Larry Poons, *Will My Soul Pass Through the Southland*, 1999
Mixed media on canvas
75 × 165 inches
On loan from the artist and the Bernard Jacobson Gallery, London
Before the huge display windows of the Mina Rees Library overlooking Fifth Avenue and 34th Street stands Nancy Graves’s sprawling sculpture Between Sign and Symbol. A wildly original work, rich in reference, it captures the artist’s singular ability to bring together in a comprehensive whole an extraordinary array of disparate objects. Among them: an Egyptian sculpted cat, a sunflower, vertebrae, a plow, the hand of Michelangelo’s Dying Slave, the head of Laocoön from the Hellenistic sculpture, and a wave from a Japanese print.

The choice of these elements reflects the range of the artist’s interests that grew from an early focus on organic forms, natural science, and primitive cultures to include Greek, Roman, and Egyptian cultures, the Renaissance, and the Far East.

Between Sign and Symbol, a 1992 work of “bronze with polychrome patina and slumped and fused glass,” was created long after Graves had begun working with bronze. By this time she was patinating the metal in colors of striking intensity and had vastly expanded the number and variety of items represented in her works—including many cast directly from the objects themselves. This rich and diverse inventory of cast objects made possible a wealth of imaginative juxtaposition often reflecting “an affinity for surrealism” with which she is credited by her longtime friend Diane Kelder, professor emerita of art history at the Graduate Center.

As Graves herself described the assembly process, “the various fragments function formally as building elements in the composition . . . where they create a clash between cultural expectations and the new uses to which they are put. You might say that I am interested in making art out of what has been art, what in fact are the shards of art.”

In 2002, seven years after Graves’s death at fifty-five, the exhibition Nancy Graves: Breaking Boundaries at the GC gallery, curated by Professor Kelder, displayed the breadth of her work in painting, sculpture, watercolor, and film. Included was her massive 1991 painting Magnetic Plate of Calls and Answers, now on loan to the GC collection from the Nancy Graves Foundation, as are Between Sign and Symbol and the much smaller Howling and Hissing.

Prominent among the cast objects in Between Sign and Symbol (opposite) is this Egyptian sculpture of a cat (right) and the Hellenistic head of Laocoön (top right), the Trojan priest who, legend has it, warned against “Greeks bearing gifts” and met a grisly end for offending the gods.

Nancy Graves, Between Sign and Symbol, 1992
Bronze with polychrome patina and slumped and fused glass
108 × 112 × 80 inches
On loan from the Nancy Graves Foundation Inc., New York, NY
High on the wall of the Skylight Room (and safely out of reach, as much of the Graduate Center art is displayed) is Susan Roth’s *Age of Bronze* (opposite). A prominent figure in the resurgent abstract impressionist movement, Roth is said to “experiment with the plasticity of visual media” in both her sculpture and paintings, using acrylic, box tops, sheaths of canvas and “accretions” to give her paintings texture.

Susan Roth, *Age of Bronze*, 1987
Acrylic and canvas on canvas
88 × 98 inches
On extended loan from the artist (2011)

Also high in the Skylight Room is Kenneth Noland’s *Across* (above). One of the premier color-field painters of the sixties, Noland experimented with symmetrical bands of color in chevron shapes in works like *Across* during this period of his career. In the catalogue essay for a 1977 retrospective exhibition at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, curator Diane Waldman wrote, “Noland’s search for the ideal Platonic form has crystallized into an art in which color and form are held in perfect equilibrium.”

Kenneth Noland, *Across*, 1964
Acrylic on canvas
97 × 125 inches
On loan from Michael Hecht
Georges Dayez’s painting View of Toledo covers the wall at the entrance to the provost’s office. The Paris-born artist, who first exhibited at the 1928 Salon d’Automne, was a frequent visitor to Toledo, Spain, and was fascinated by the changing seasonal light patterns he found there.

Georges Dayez
View of Toledo, 1967–70
Oil on canvas
51 × 77 inches
Gift of the artist arranged by George Schwab

Before Alex Katz’s Pop Art–influenced Brisk Day, his three-part portrait of a nameless woman in a red coat—the same image in three different printing techniques—is the guardian of the Graduate Center’s collection, Ray Ring. A practicing artist himself, Ring oversees the GC’s building design and exhibitions. “Integrating significant works of art into the daily experience of the GC community is one of the most exciting aspects of managing the collection,” he says. “Having these works throughout the building—in hallways, meeting rooms, the library—is an institutional tradition,” and one that Ring has overseen for forty years.

Alex Katz, Brisk Day (Red Coat), 1990–91
One silkscreen, one aquatint, and one woodcut
35½ × 28½ inches each
Edition 111/150
Gift of Michael Hecht
About Animals, Minerals, and Blueberries

ELEPHANT INSIGHT

Do elephants have insight? Are they capable of what behavioral neuroscientists consider “spontaneous problem solving”? Classic studies from the 1910s showed chimpanzees don’t need trial and error to see how to use sticks to get bananas hanging out of reach. So, what about elephants? They have large and complex brains, exceptional long-term memory, and highly developed social behavior. They can make and use tools and are considered by biopsychologists to be highly intelligent. But they rarely get a passing grade when tested for insight and generally seem unable to solve problems without resorting to trial and error.

To solve a problem in your head is to have insight. Chimps have it. And now, it seems, so have elephants.

The problem, it now seems, may have less to do with the limitation of the elephants than the shortcomings of the tests. That’s what is indicated by a study published this past summer, in the online journal PLoS One, by Preston Foerder, a doctoral candidate at the Graduate Center, and his colleagues at the GC and the Smithsonian National Zoological Park. Seeking evidence of elephant insight, the authors tried several variations of the using-tools-to-get-food test to see if their elephant subjects would have what Foerder calls “the ‘aha’ moment... the sudden arrival of a solution to a problem.”

The GC-Smithsonian team tested three elephants, two mature females and a juvenile—a seven-year-old male named Kandula. Provided bamboo sticks, the three elephants failed to use them to reach fruit placed just outside the bars of their enclosure. They didn’t even try, although they did use the sticks to scratch themselves, bang on the floor, and pry at the doors.

Next, the team hung bamboo branches baited with fruit within the elephants’ outside yard—mostly out of reach. In addition to sticks, the females now were given a large aluminum tub, while Kandula got a large plastic cube. Both objects could support the elephants’ two front feet and put them within reach of all the fruit. The ladies didn’t get it. They never tried to use the sticks or move the tub to get more fruit. Kandula did figure it out—not at once, but without trial and error. In the seventh session of the first experiment, he first snacked on some of the reachable fruit, then left that location, went to the cube, and moved it to where the fruit hung. Then, with his front feet on the cube, he brought down the whole branch. This feat was repeated in subsequent sessions, wherever the fruit was hung. He even placed the cube at the edge of the enclosure to reach blossoms on an overhanging tree. In later experiments, Kandula used a large tractor tire to secure high-hanging fruit, tried standing on a large ball, and even stacked butcher-block cutting boards.

It took young Kandula a while, but his “aha moment” arrived and down came the food-laden branch.
Foerder and his coauthors, including his thesis adviser Diana Reiss (Prof., Hunter, Psychology), who conceived and designed the experiments with Foerder and analyzed the data with him, make a strong case for “insightful problem solving through tool use” by elephants. They cite “the suddenness of Kandula’s problem solving behavior without evidence of prior trial and error learning,” and “persistent use of this problem solving technique in subsequent sessions and transference to other objects.” This behavior, they maintain, “is consistent with the definition and other criteria that some have set for insightful problem solving.”

As to why elephants fail to use sticks to secure otherwise unreachable fruit, the team has a well-reasoned explanation. “We believe,” they write, “that the problem in previous studies has been in treating the elephant trunk as a grasping appendage analogous to a primate hand.” Not so, they contend. “Although the trunk is a highly manipulable appendage, in food foraging its function as a sensory organ takes precedence.” With the elephants’ extraordinary sense of smell and a trunk tip as highly innervated as a human fingertip, the trunk is “a superb appendage to locate and acquire food . . . it provides the animal with both olfactory and tactile information.” But, as the paper explains, “when a stick is held in the trunk, the tip is curled backward and may be closed, prohibiting olfactory and tactile feedback.” So while they will use trunk-held tools for other purposes, elephants would be understandably reluctant to use them to acquire food.

—ISM

GORILLA DIETS
Jessica Rothman (Asst. Prof., Hunter, Anthropology) wouldn’t expect the people in our midst to “ape” the eating habits of Uganda’s wild mountain gorillas. But from the research she and her team at Hunter College’s Primatc Nutrition Lab have been conducting, it might not be such a bad idea!

Rothman’s recent findings were published by the Royal Society of London and earned her a Feliks Gross Endowment Award from CUNY’s Academy for the Humanities and Sciences. They show that the gorillas’ menu varies. At certain times of the year it reflects the nutritional recommendations of the American Heart Association, while at other times it comes closer to high-protein, low-fat diets for weight loss. The difference, says Rothman, has to do with how these predominantly herbivorous apes work protein into their diet.

When leaves are their chief food source, she explains, the gorillas load up on them, consuming lots of the leaf protein concentrate (LPC) they contain. This may be great for apes, but there’s no way the human digestive system could deal with the amount of fiber-rich leaves it would take to fill our dietary protein needs with LPC. Nor, for that matter, are leaves the gorillas’ first food choice. When fruit is in abundance, the gorillas favor it over leaves, thus providing them with a diet that meets the AHA’s heart-healthy recommendations.

“Since we previously thought that primates may be limited by protein,” Rothman explains, “this provides a major advance in understanding their nutritional priorities.”

To conduct their research, Rothman and her team spend three months each year in Uganda, where they divide their time between the steep and rugged terrain of Bwindi Impenetrable Forest and the Makerere University Biological Field Station on the edge of Kibale National Park, which holds the densest population of nonhuman primates in the world.

This past summer Rothman was joined by seven students, including four from Hunter and two GC Ph.D. candidates. One of these, Caley Johnson, is investigating the nutritional strategies of forest baboons. The other, Scott Blumenthal, is characterizing the habitats and diets of primates, including gorillas, using stable isotopes. “Caley’s research will provide interesting comparative data to the gorilla study and help us understand how nutritional strategies vary across primates,” Rothman says, “and Scott’s may lend insight to the fossil record.”

Another interesting finding made by Rothman and her team helps explain why gorillas have a tendency to suck on wood chips and lick the bases of tree stumps. As it turns out, this is how the gorillas get over 95 percent of their dietary sodium. This unusual snacking habit, however, is obviously not one that Rothman recommends people mimic.

Even so, by learning what primates eat, she points out, “we not only come to understand their nutrition, but we can also find ways of improving human diets and can understand more about the evolution of human diet.”

—Jackie Glasthal

A ROCK FROM THE PAST
A 4.5-billion-year-old meteorite that once traveled through a vast and turbulent asteroid belt outside the orbit of Mars has yielded a never-before-seen mineral that will help planetary scientists better understand the solar system’s genesis. Principal researchers making this discovery were Dr. Harold C. Connolly Jr. (Prof., Kingsborough Community, Earth and Environmental Sciences) and his undergraduate research assistant Stuart A. Sweeny Smith, an intern at the American Museum of Natural History (AMNH).

An expert in earth and planetary sciences, Connolly is familiar with the composition of
Professor Edward Kennelly of Lehman College and GC alumna and adjunct faculty member Paola L. Pedraza-Peñalosa have discovered the secret of these flowering blueberry bushes. They’re just loaded with antioxidants. At least two species of the neotropical berries have two to four times as many of the disease-fighting molecules as the domestic “highbush” blueberries we prize for their antioxidant content.

“We consider these two species of neotropical blueberries to be extreme superfruits with great potential to benefit human health,” reported Kennelly, adding that, though he has yet to see them sold commercially in the United States, he expects that to change as interest grows.

The two species that registered highest in antioxidants were among a group of five native to the tropical regions of Central and South America that the scientists analyzed, gathering them from the New York Botanical Garden’s Nolen Greenhouses for Living Collections and Enid A. Haupt Conservatory and the Atlanta Botanical Garden. Highbush blueberries grown in the northeast United States and bought at a local supermarket were used in the analysis as a positive control.

“With highbush blueberry being referred to in the popular literature as a ‘superfruit,’” the scientists reasoned, “the two neotropical species have the potential to be even more highly promising edible fruits, on the basis of our findings.”

To Pedraza-Peñalosa, just the fact that these “super-duper” fruits are native to the Andes Mountains’ high-elevation forests, one of the world’s most endangered ecosystems, underscores the importance of preserving Earth’s biodiversity. “There are so many things out there that could have an impact on our lives,” says Pedraza-Peñalosa. “That’s why we should be worried about conservation in our country and in other countries; because you never know when good things will come to light.”

—Rachel Ramírez

SUPER-DUPER BLUEBERRIES

Think all blueberries are created equal? Well, think again!

Edward Kennelly (Professor, Lehman, Biochemistry, Biology, Chemistry), an expert in medicinal plants, and botanist Paola L. Pedraza-Peñalosa, a GC alumna and adjunct faculty member based at the New York Botanical Garden, have discovered that two neotropical species of wild blueberries—Cavendishia grandifolia and Anthopterus wardii—contain two to four times more antioxidants than the “highbush” blueberries commonly found in U.S. markets. Their findings were published in the peer-reviewed Journal of Agricultural and Food Chemistry.

Oxidation—the process that causes bicycle fenders to rust and freshly cut apples to turn brown—can also lead to problems in humans, such as coronary heart disease or certain cancers. Antioxidants are molecules capable of inhibiting oxidation. They can scavenge free radicals, the unstable and highly reactive molecules or single atoms that range through the body oxidizing and destroying tissue.

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—Jackie Glasthal
Paul Krugman tells how we got into the Great Recession and why we still linger close by.

“How bad is the U.S. economy?” was the opening question at “An Evening with Paul Krugman.” This was the third in the series Perspectives: Conversations on Policy and Place with Peter Beinart, and it drew a standing room crowd to Elebash Recital Hall on April 3rd.

“There was a period from the fall of Lehman until sometime in the spring of 2009, which I refer to as the ‘Oh God, we’re all going to die’ period,” replied Krugman, a Princeton professor, Nobel laureate economist, and New York Times columnist. “And that didn’t happen. . . . The world didn’t come to an end. We don’t have 20-something percent unemploy-ment.” But he was quick to point out the grim unemployment statistics that we do have. “So it’s awful; it’s not catastrophic. In a way, that’s almost the problem. We can drift on like this for a long time with no action-forcing event, but meanwhile an enormous amount of damage is being done.”

This opening exchange followed introductions by Graduate Center President William P. Kelly, who identified Krugman as “the most important political columnist in America.” He added, “For me, Professor Krugman’s greatest gift is the quality of his prose,” noting that “in rendering the complex accessible, he is without peer.” Peter Beinart, a senior fellow of the New America Foundation, senior political writer for the Daily Beast, and associate professor of journalism and political science at the Graduate Center, then drew Krugman across the economic landscape, focusing chiefly on the how and why of the recession and what subsequently has, hasn’t, and might have been done.

Here (lightly edited) are some key questions and responses.

How did we get in this mess?
To this question Krugman replied, “Like everyone serious, I’ve become a Minskyite,” explaining how the late Hyman Minsky, a prescient but not notably influential economist, “turned out to be the person to follow.” As Krugman put it, “Minsky’s story was basically that periods of relative economic calm make people complacent, both individual investors and individual borrowers. They also make government officials and regulators complacent, and what happens during those periods is a big buildup of debt. You might think that one person’s liability is another person’s asset and debt by itself doesn’t make society either richer or poorer. But what it does is make you more vulnerable.

“Levels of debt rose, and regulations were stripped away, and, more important, they were not extended. As the banking system grew more complex, the regulations were not updated. So, we ended up with much higher levels of debt than we had before, and then we arrived at what is sometimes called the Minsky moment, or my preference—the Wile E. Coyote moment.” (That’s the moment in the Looney Tunes cartoons when the coyote, “having run about five feet off a cliff, looks down.”)

“So we hit that moment when there were some shocks out there, there were some failures, the housing bubble started to deflate. People looked down, and saw those debt levels were too high. There was this enormous pressure on those who were highly in debt to slash their spending and start paying down their debt, with no comparable pressure on the creditors to increase their spending. There was a sharp fall in spending all across the advanced world.

“What’s supposed to happen then is that Uncle Alan or Uncle Ben cuts interest rates to stimulate spending. . . . But there’s a big problem with that, which can be summarized in one word—zero. You can’t cut interest rates below zero. So, Uncle Ben did in fact cut interest rates to zero . . . and it wasn’t remotely enough. So, we have this global slump which is very hard to exit from because the simple policy—the aspirin we normally take when we’ve got an economic headache, which is cutting interest rates—won’t deal with this one. That’s where we’re sitting and seem likely to sit for quite some time.”

What should we have done?
“There are various ways in which the Federal Reserve or the European Central Bank can push the economy up, even if it can’t cut interest rates below zero. It can promise that it won’t raise interest rates for a very long time, and that might lead people to be more confident and to borrow. It can promise that it’s going to deliver some inflation, which makes it a bad idea to sit on money and a good idea to borrow or to spend. There hasn’t been much of that . . . because, within the Fed, and within the ECB, there are people who get hysterical at any thought of inflation.

“The other thing you can do—if the private sector cannot be induced to spend enough to create jobs—the public sector can step into the gap temporarily, and you can have a lot of public spending. The Great Depression, which was the last time we had anything like this, was brought to an end by a large program of public works spending otherwise known as World War II.

“So we had a much-hyped stimulus plan from Obama, which was way too small. Furthermore, given the cutbacks in the state and local level . . . it turns out that government spending in America has actually grown more slowly since the crisis than before it hit.

“If I could dismiss political reality, I would say that what we need
Most of the people making a big fuss about the deficit are not sincere. They are not deficit hawks. They are deficit exploiters.

How much of a role do you think that played in the Obama administration’s unwillingness to adopt the policy that you would have advised?

“Some. Just as Obama was taking office, some of us were basically maximalist on all fronts. This is the crisis of three generations and you should be doing everything, and that would include the politically risky. Go for a really big stimulus and, because the banks were in a shaky condition, you should really put a lot of money into recapitalizing the banks. But that either becomes an immense giveaway or you really have to take ownership of at least the major ones. So I was for nationalizing probably Citigroup and possibly Bank of America but to nationalize at least one big bank, if only to encourage the others.”

“I think that would have worked. But the counterargument was don’t rock the boat too much, this could be risky, and it was one of those things where, even after the fact, it’s really hard to prove. On stimulus, clearly I was right and they were wrong.”

A lot of what’s consuming the debate in Washington is fears about debt. To what degree do you think these fears are right?

“I am very angry at the Greeks because the whole debate has been Hellenized. We had this fiscal crisis in Greece, and Greece is completely sui generis. Greece was deeply fiscally irresponsible, has been for its entire history as a modern nation.

“The U.S. is not at all like Greece. We have a long-run budget problem. If you try to think about where we will be in twenty years, something has to give. . . . But there is no immediate problem. There is no cash-flow problem. People are putting actual money on the line and are willing to lend the U.S. government and buy ten-year bonds at an interest rate of 3.5 percent. So, we have plenty of leeway. We have to demonstrate that we are actually prepared to do stuff in the long run, but it’s not a short-run problem. We actually should be spending more now, but then look for ways to bring things under control in the long run.

“Most of the people making a big fuss about debt deficits are not sincere. They are not deficit hawks, they are deficit exploiters. They are trying to use it to get their particular agenda in. Very few of them are willing to do anything that goes against that agenda in order to bring down debt deficits.”

One thing you have written a lot about over the years is inequality, and I wonder how much of a problem the degree of inequality is from an economics point of view?

“That’s a tough question. I have been talking about inequality for a while. I would show people charts showing how we have returned to
1929 levels of inequality and people would say, ah 1929, we must have another Great Depression coming, and I would pooh-pooh that. I would say well, you know, I don't quite see the mechanism, and then, of course, here we are.

“So then the question is still, where's the causality; what's the mechanism? How does it work? There's got to be something important there because it is a pretty strong coincidence.

“Still, the Europeans have had a crisis fully the equal of ours. Theirs was done differently. It was old-fashioned crony-capitalism and conventional banks, rather than exotic financial instruments nobody understood. But the end result was pretty similar. The housing bust and the banking bust in Europe are fully equal to the United States without U.S. levels of inequality. The Europeans have managed to achieve this without having entered a second Gilded Age. So there is at least some argument that says inequality is not an essential part of the story.”

Following Beinart’s questioning, Krugman had some trenchant things to say in response to questions from the audience.

On why the conventional wisdom that drove the 2010 elections—too much government spending, too many regulations, and taxes too high—varies so much from what Krugman believes:

What the public wants, he said, is “lower spending and lower deficits without higher taxes and without touching Medicare—and a pony. The public doesn't have consistent views. . . . And if your idea is that elections are decided on whether the philosophy offered by the winning party corresponds to the public beliefs, there’s no evidence of that.” Moreover, he pointed out that “the world we are in now is a world in which many of the things that make sense in normal times are no longer true and a lot of stuff is opposite. It’s a world in which, for example, more saving—whether consumer or government savings—actually leads to lower investment, because it depresses the economy and, with a depressed economy, businesses become less willing to invest. So, it’s an upside-down world. We’re in bizarro land now and it’s a bit much to expect voters to grasp that, especially if nobody in Washington is trying to explain it to them.”

On the long-term effects of the attack on unions and collective bargaining:

“The rise and fall of middle-class America,” he said, “tracks the rise and fall of the unions very closely. That doesn’t mean it’s totally causal, but I think it is an important factor, and I think the most important thing at this point is about political influence. The unions, love them or not, are the only organized counterweight to the power of big money and so, if you erode those, you go back to full Gilded Age-type politics.”

On how confident he is that he is right and his opponents wrong:

“I am highly confident that they are wrong; less so that I am right. . . . A lot of what is going on here is really pretty basic. . . . Often pointing out that two plus two really does equal four is enough to make a highly controversial statement.”

“There are some things that I am less sure of than others,” he added. “I am very sure that the idea that cutting spending in a recession is actually going to expand the economy is wrong, a little bit less sure that expanding spending is actually going to help—although I’m pretty sure of that, but not as confident.”

On job openings for college graduates and Krugman’s New York Times column criticizing “the current obsession with making every kid college-ready”:

“The recession has been terrible for everybody. College graduates are doing terribly. So are non-college graduates. Everyone is doing terribly. There are some hints—a little more than hints—if you look further out, at the fifteen-year horizon, that the demand for labor is kind of hollowing out in the middle. We have growing demand for very low-education workers, for basically menial service jobs, and, at the same time, we have a demand at the top end, for very highly educated, postgraduate-level people, with the middle kind of dropping out, and that’s kind of alarming.

“My main point in that particular column was to debunk the notion that the solution to our problem was just to have more education. . . . Right now, get yourself a college degree, you still then step out into the world and find a job market that is offering very few jobs and, by and large, jobs that don’t actually make use of those skills you’ve acquired. It’s a very American thing. We think education is the solution to everything, but it’s not at all the solution to where we are now.”

At this point Peter Beinart ended the questioning, declaring, “Well, on that cheery note, thank you very much,” and drew the evening to a close.

—ISM
“Is this the little lady who made the great war?” That, it is said, is how Abraham Lincoln greeted Harriet Beecher Stowe, when she came to the White House in the winter of 1862 to urge the President to sign the Emancipation Proclamation. No one knows if Lincoln actually said those words, but the Graduate Center’s Distinguished Professor David S. Reynolds makes a powerful case for the extraordinary influence of Stowe’s Uncle Tom’s Cabin: or, Life among the Lowly in his own latest book, Mightier than the Sword.

A leading literary critic and historian, Reynolds has written extensively of Walt Whitman’s America and the Jacksonian era. In 2005, he published the prize-winning John Brown, Abolitionist: The Man Who Killed Slavery, Sparked the Civil War, and Seeded Civil Rights. But it is Stowe, whose 1852 book dramatized the realities of slavery, that Reynolds credits with reshaping public opinion and making abolition a popular cause, which led to the election of Lincoln, and, as a result, to secession. From that perspective, “Igniting the War” is not an inappropriate title for the chapter that starts with the following excerpt. Moreover, Reynolds considers Uncle Tom’s Cabin “central to redefining American democracy on a more egalitarian basis” and a potent force for the cause of social justice.

As for Stowe herself, Reynolds calls her “a little lady with six kids, struggling just above the poverty line, a complete outsider, who came along and changed public opinion through her pen.” Not that Harriet and the Beecher clan were nonentities. With their father, a leading New England clergyman, Harriet and her ten outspoken siblings and half-siblings—including six ministers (the prominent Henry Ward Beecher among them)—lacked neither influence nor what Reynolds describes as “the Puritan zeal for reform.”

Though Reynolds allows that the Puritans had their harsh, uncompromising side, “at the same time,” he says, “there was a really rebellious side to them that wanted to correct society, even social injustice, and Harriet Beecher Stowe considered herself a Puritan in that reforming sense.” She was also deeply religious and had no doubt that Uncle Tom’s Cabin was divinely inspired. “It came to me in a series of visions,” she said, and once declared, “God wrote the novel.”

However it came to be written, Uncle Tom’s Cabin was an enormous success, the nation’s first great blockbuster best seller, selling 310,000 copies in the United States its first year, a million copies in the United Kingdom, and two million worldwide. It was to become a marketing bonanza, with a plethora of what became known as “Uncle Tomitudes”: paintings and engravings, dolls, candy, puzzles, and playing cards. “In London,” Reynolds writes, “one could buy Uncle Tom’s Shrinkable Woolen Stockings, Uncle Tom’s Improved Flageolets, and Uncle Tom’s Pure Unadulterated Coffee.” All of this brought nothing to Harriet Beecher Stowe.

Neither did she benefit from the Uncle Tom plays that first took the stage in 1852. Versions of the play proliferated in the United States and throughout the world. There were six versions playing in London in 1853 and four in Paris. By the 1880s, companies of “Tommers,” as they came to be called, were crisscrossing the country, and the plays remained popular well into the twentieth century.

“As the story moved from book to stage, Stowe’s revolutionary themes were drowned in sentimentality and spectacle,” wrote Reynolds in the New York Times this past June. “Uncle Tom, meanwhile, was often presented as a stooped, obedient old fool, the model of a submissive black man.” It was this characterization that, in part, gave rise to the image of an Uncle Tom, whose name, he added, “has become a byword for a spineless black man who betrays his race.”

It is a view Reynolds calls “egregiously inaccurate,” for Stowe’s Uncle Tom, he reminds us, “was physically strong and morally courageous, an inspiration for people worldwide. In other words, Uncle Tom was anything but an ‘Uncle Tom.’”

—ISM
shaped the political scene by making the North, formerly largely hostile to the antislavery reform, far more open to it than it had been. The novel and its dissemination in plays, essays, reviews, and tie-in merchandise directly paved the way for the public’s openness to an antislavery candidate like Lincoln. Simultaneously, it stiffened the South’s resolve to defend slavery and demonize the North.

In writing a novel directly aimed at the Fugitive Slave Law, Stowe was challenging the long-revered Whig senators Daniel Webster of Massachusetts and Henry Clay of Kentucky, who endorsed the law as a part of the Compromise of 1850. By imposing harsh penalties on Northerners who abetted blacks attempting to escape from slavery, the law helped preserve the Union by confirming the clause in the Constitution that mandated the return of any “Person held to Service or Labour in One State” who escaped “into another.” The claim has substance. Uncle Tom’s Cabin was challenging the long-revered Whig senators Daniel Webster of Massachusetts and Henry Clay of Kentucky, who endorsed the law as a part of the Compromise of 1850. By imposing harsh penalties on Northerners who abetted blacks attempting to escape from slavery, the law helped preserve the Union by confirming the clause in the Constitution that mandated the return of any “Person held to Service or Labour in One State” who escaped “into another.”

Stowe was the leading popularizer of higher law—held by those who looked beyond the Constitution or the Fugitive Slave Law to the law of natural justice, supported by God and morality—which its advocates considered more sacred than any human statute. Frederick Douglass wrote of Uncle Tom’s Cabin, “We doubt if abler arguments have ever been presented in favor of the ‘Higher Law’ than may be found here [in] Mrs. Stowe’s truly great work.” Another reviewer described “the tears which [Uncle Tom’s Cabin] has drawn from millions of eyes, the sense of a ‘higher law,’ which it has stamped upon a million hearts.”

By the same token, Southerners denounced the novel as the epitome of Northerners’ defiance of the Constitution. The Southern Literary Messenger branded the novel as “this new missionary of the higher law” and declared that “this portentous book of sin” enforced “the doctrines and practices of the higher-law agitators at the North.” A proslavery Democratic newspaper likewise associated Stowe with “all the enemies of the Constitution; all the disciples of the higher law” in the North.

Both the eulogists and critics of Uncle Tom’s Cabin were right about its support of the higher law. Stowe viewed the history of American slavery as an unfolding drama with defenders of the higher law as heroes and its opponents as villains. Chief among the latter, in her eyes, was Daniel Webster. She was among several prominent Northerners who were appalled when Webster capitulated to the proslavery side by putting his famous eloquence at the service of the Fugitive Slave Law. The poet Whittier wrote of Webster: “So fallen! So lost! the light / Which he once wore! The glory / From his gray hair gone / Forevermore!” Longfellow added his poetic lament: “Fallen, fallen, fallen, from his high estate.” For Emerson, Webster’s apostasy revealed that “no forms, neither constitutions, nor laws, nor covenants, nor churches, nor Bibles, are of any use in themselves. The Devil nests comfortably into them all.”

Harriet Beecher Stowe wrote that when Webster endorsed the fugitive bill he “moved over to the side of evil! It was as if a great constellation had changed sides in the heavens, drawing after it a third part of the stars.” Many Americans, she noted, temporarily heeded “the serpent voice with which he scoffed at the idea that there was a law of God higher than any law or constitution of the United States.” But then came a majestic rebound. “Back came the healthy blood,” she wrote, “the re-awakened pulses of moral feeling . . . and there were found voices on all sides to speak for the right, and hearts to respond.” Uncle Tom’s Cabin led this major cultural rebound.

Stowe had deep personal connections to advocates of the higher law. Before her novel appeared, one of the strongest pronouncements against the Fugitive Slave Law was an 1851 sermon by her brother Charles, The Duty of Disobedience to Wicked Laws, which equated breaking the law with godliness. Stowe also had a personal history with William Henry Seward, the New York senator who in his famous reply to Daniel Webster publicized the controversial phrase by declaring that in considering slavery Americans must follow “a higher law than the Constitution.”

In the 1840s Seward had served as a lawyer in a nationally visible legal case along with another future Lincoln appointee, Salmon P. Chase, whom Stowe had known since her early Cincinnati days. The case, which came before the Supreme Court in 1846, originated in Ohio close to where Stowe lived and involved her friend John Van Zandt, the model for John Van Trompe in Uncle Tom’s Cabin.

Van Zandt was the farmer and conductor on the Underground Railroad to whom Calvin Stowe and Henry Ward Beecher had
conveyed one of the Stowes' servants, a fugitive slave. Van Zandt had formerly lived in Kentucky and, after liberating his slaves, had settled in Hamilton County, Ohio.

In the spring of 1843, another attempt by Van Zandt to help fugitive slaves landed him in court. The incident occurred in the Walnut Hills neighborhood where Harriet and Calvin Stowe lived. On April 24, Van Zandt had driven his wagon a dozen miles down the Montgomery Turnpike from his farm to Cincinnati, where he sold his spring vegetables at a market. He stayed the night with friends in nearby Walnut Hills and started toward home early the next morning. Around 3 a.m., near Lane Seminary, he encountered a family of nine blacks who, he learned, had two days earlier fled the Boone County, Kentucky, farm of their master, Wharton Jones. The runaways begged Van Zandt to take them thirty or forty miles north. Ever obliging to fugitives, Van Zandt agreed to do so. He hid with eight of the blacks in his covered wagon and had the ninth, Andrew, drive the team. The wagon had not gone fifteen miles before it was stopped by two slave-catchers, Hefferman and Hargrove, who had been surveilling Van Zandt. Though the slave-catchers missed seizing Andrew, who fled into nearby woods, they captured the remaining blacks, who were sent back to their Kentucky master. Van Zandt was taken into custody and soon appeared before the Ohio circuit court, which charged him with violating the Fugitive Slave Law of 1793.

Van Zandt asked the Ohio antislavery lawyer Salmon Chase to defend him in court. The tall, muscular Chase, known as the Attorney General of Fugitive Slaves because of his famous defenses of runaways, accepted the case pro bono. After his eloquent pleas on behalf of Van Zandt failed to persuade the court, Chase appealed all the way to the Supreme Court, where he was joined on the defense team by the slight, red-haired New Yorker Seward.

Before the Supreme Court, Chase and Seward turned the Van Zandt case into a lesson on the higher law. Chase pitted the principles of liberty and justice against the 1793 law regarding fugitives. "No legislature," he declared, "can make right wrong, or wrong right. No legislature can make light, darkness; or darkness, light. No legislature can make men, things, or things, men." Even the highest court in the land, Chase asserted, cannot "disregard the fundamental principles of rectitude and justice." In words that Stowe quoted approvingly many years later, Chase added that on questions "which partake largely of a moral and political nature, the judgment, even of this Court, cannot be regarded as altogether final. The decision, to be made here, must, necessarily, be rejudged at the tribunal of public opinion—the opinion, not of the American People only, but of the Civilized World."

As it turned out, Chase was right, though not in the way he anticipated. His appeal to higher law failed to persuade the Supreme Court, which decided against Van Zandt, stating that it must "stand by the Constitution and the laws." Van Zandt was penalized with a fine of $1,700, far more than he could afford. Soon, as Stowe wrote, "he died broken-hearted." After his death, the fine was passed on to his heirs.

But the case was not lost, for both Chase and Van Zandt had a determined friend who would put all fugitive slave enactments on trial before the tribunal of the entire world. Uncle Tom's Cabin, William Seward declared, became "Van Zandt's best monument."

Van Zandt's and that of many others, too, including Josiah Henson, Lewis Clarke, and Eliza Harris. Stowe expertly wove together these and other real-life stories with popular cultural threads—from visionary and biblical fiction through moral reform and minstrelsy—she had gathered during her long literary apprenticeship. By bringing together all of these strands, Stowe directed the whole range of America's favorite pop-culture images toward an assault on slavery. In doing so, she created a uniquely influential higher-law document, one that far superseded her earlier efforts in antislavery fiction.

Not that those efforts had been in vain. Between 1845 and 1851, she published three antislavery short stories, each of which in some way anticipated Uncle Tom's Cabin. Her 1845 tale "Immediate Emancipation" portrays a kindly slaveowner who voluntarily frees his slave Sam, who has fled north and is living with Quakers. On hearing that Sam desires freedom, the master issues manumission papers. The moral is that a man unfortunate enough to be a slaveholder "may be enlightened, generous, humane, and capable for the most disinterested regard for the welfare of the slave"—a message that prefigures the positive portrayal of St. Clare in Uncle Tom's Cabin.

"Stowe directed the whole range of America's favorite pop-culture images toward an assault on slavery."
Margarita Aguilar (Student, Art History) has been appointed director of El Museo del Barrio in East Harlem, New York.

Robert Bittman (Dist. Prof., Queens, Biochemistry, Chemistry) was the keynote speaker at the National Lipid Forum of Finland on May 30.

Randolph L. Braham (Dist. Prof. Emer., GC, Political Science), director of the Rosenthal Institute for Holocaust Studies and a Holocaust survivor, was awarded the Medium Cross of the Order of the Republic of Hungary at the ceremonial opening of the Randolph L. Braham Library and Information Center of the Holocaust Memorial Centre in Budapest, Hungary.

Cindi Katz (Prof., GC, Earth and Environmental Sciences, Psychology) accepted a 2011–12 appointment as the Diane Middlebrook and Carl Djerassi Visiting Professor in Gender Studies at the University of Cambridge.

Margaret Bull Kovera (Prof., John Jay, Criminal Justice, Psychology) became editor, this August, of Law and Human Behavior (LHB), the official journal of the American Psychology-Law Society (APLSS)/Division 41 of the American Psychological Association (APA).

Soyeon Lee (Student, Music), pianist, will join Lincoln Center’s Chamber Music Society Two program in the 2012–13 season.

Joshua Mehigan (Student, English) received a 2011–12 creative writing fellowship in poetry from the National Endowment for the Arts.


Ceren Ozgi (Student, Anthropology) was the 2011 recipient of the Mellon/American Council of Learned Societies Dissertation Completion Fellowship in Anthropology.

Tracey Revenson (Prof., GC, Psychology), associate editor of the Annals of Behavioral Medicine and a fellow of the American Psychology Association and the Society for Behavioral Medicine, gave a keynote speech at the European Health Psychology Society annual meeting on the island of Crete on September 21.

James Saslow (Prof., Queens, Art History, Theatre) was honored in June by the premiere of his first full-length opera, The Picture of Dorian Gray, written with composer Jeffrey Brody and based on Oscar Wilde’s work. The opera was commissioned by the Longwood Opera Company in Needham, Massachusetts.

David Savran (Vera Mowry Roberts Chair in American Theatre, Dist. Prof., GC, English, Theatre) will give three Messenger Lectures at Cornell University. Savran also won a Kurt Weill Prize for the chapter “Fascinating Rhythm” in his book Highbrow/Lowdown: Theater, Jazz, and the Making of the New Middle Class (University of Michigan Press, 2009).

Dennis Sullivan (Albert Einstein Chair in Science/Mathematics, Dist. Prof., GC/Queens, Mathematics) was selected as one of five new honorary members of the Royal Irish Academy, the principal learned society in Ireland.


Leo Treitler (Dist. Prof. Emer., GC, Music), world-renowned musicologist, pioneer in the interdisciplinary study of medieval and early Renaissance music, and fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, received an honorary degree from the New England Conservatory of Music, Boston.

Georgiana Shick Tryon (Prof., GC, Educational Psychology) was awarded APA Fellow status because of the national impact of her research on psychotherapy process.

Katherine Verdery (Julian J. Studley Faculty Scholar, Dist. Prof., GC, Anthropology) won the 2011 J. I. Saley Prize for The Vanishing Hectare (Cornell University Press, 2003). The School for Advanced Research awards the prize for a book that exemplifies outstanding scholarship and writing in anthropology.

Barry J. Zimmerman (Dist. Prof. Emer., GC, Educational Psychology) received the APA’s 2011 E. L. Thorndike Award for Career Achievement in Educational Psychology.
This list does not include all titles published since the previous listing in Folio (Spring 2011). Several more recent submissions will be included in our next issue. All members of the doctoral faculty are invited to contact pubaff@gc.cuny.edu with information about their books once final proofs have been submitted. More complete descriptions and links for purchase may be viewed at http://www.gc.cuny.edu/Faculty/GC-Faculty-Publications.

ANDRÉ ACIMAN (Dist. Prof., GC, Comparative Literature, French), Alibis: Essays on Elsewhere (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2011). A series of linked essays about time, place, identity, art, and art, from beautiful and moving pieces about the memory evoked by the scent of lavender to meditations on cities such as Barcelona, Rome, Paris, and New York.

MEENA ALEXANDER (Dist. Prof., Hunter, English), Otto Poesie da “Quickly Changing River” (Sinopia di Venezia, 2011). Eight poems from the writer's collection Quickly Changing River, translated into Italian by Marco Fazzini.

MARTIN ATANGANA (Assoc. Prof., York, History), The End of French Rule in Cameroon (University Press of America, 2010). A study of the decolonization movement in Cameroon, this book shows the lengths to which the French were prepared to go to leave the country in the hands of a government sympathetic to their interests.


STEVEN M. CAHN (Dist. Prof., GC, Philosophy, Urban Education), Robert B. Talisse, and Scott F. Akin, eds., Thinking about Logic: Classic Essays (Westview Press, 2010). The essays, selected for their brevity, clarity, and impact, illuminate how logic relates to perennial philosophical issues about knowledge, meaning, rationality, and reality.

AMY CHAZKEL (Assoc. Prof., Queens, History), Laws of Chance: Brazil’s Clandestine Lottery and the Making of Urban Public Life (Duke University Press, 2011). Chazkel analyzes the popularity of the century-old Brazilian lottery called the jogo do bicho and uncovers a rich history of public life in the decades of the early Brazilian republic.


PETER FraENKEL (Assoc. Prof., City, Psychology), Synk Your Relationship, Save Your Marriage: Four Steps to Getting Back on Track (Macmillan, 2011). This volume argues that most relationship problems can be traced to differences in daily rhythms, personal pace, and time priorities.


SUJATHA FERNANDES (Asst. Prof., Queens, Sociology), Who Can Stop the Drums? Urban Social Movements in Chávez’s Venezuela (Duke University Press, 2010). In this ethnographic study of social movements in the barrios of Caracas, Venezuela, Fernandes examines political life since the election of President Hugo Chávez.

Daniel Gerould (Dist. Prof., GC, Comparative Literature, Theatre), Quick Change: Essays on Theatre (Martin E. Segal Theatre Center, 2011). These previously uncollected writings range over Witkacy’s doubles, historical and medical simulations, Battleship Potemkin, comédie rose at the Grand Guignol, Polish and Russian symbolists, and erotic French puppets.
DAVID A. GERSTNER (Prof., Staten Island, Theatre), *Queer Pollen: White Seduction, Black Male Homosexuality, and the Cinematic* (University of Illinois Press, 2011). Gerstner discusses painter and writer Richard Bruce Nugent, author James Baldwin, and filmmaker Marlon Riggs and the ways they used various media to work through their experiences as queer black men.


JEAN GRAHAM-JONES (Prof., GC/Hunter, Hispanic and Luso-Brazilian Literatures and Languages, Theatre), ed., *Timbre 4: Two Plays by Claudio Toledo* (Martin E. Segal Theatre Center, 2011). These works from Buenos Aires’s Timbre 4 company include The Coleman Family’s Omission and Third Wing, translated by Graham-Jones and Elisa Legon.

MICHAEL GROSSMAN (Dist. Prof., GC, Business, Economics) and Naci Mocan (Economics, 1989), *Economic Aspects of Obesity* (University of Chicago Press, 2011). This economic analysis of the environments and incentives influencing individual eating behaviors provides a strong foundation for evaluating the costs and benefits of various proposals designed to control obesity.

GODFREY GUMBS (Dist. Prof., Hunter, Physics) and Danhong Huang, *Properties of Interacting Low-Dimensional Systems* (Wiley-VCH, 2011). Filling the gap in comprehensive coverage of the fundamentals and approaches needed to perform cutting-edge research on mesoscopic systems, this textbook allows advanced students to acquire and use the skills at a highly technical, research-qualifying level.

DAGMAR HERZOG (Daniel Rose Faculty Scholar, Prof., GC, History), *Sexuality in Europe: A Twentieth-Century History* (Cambridge University Press, 2011). Herszog explores many facets of sexuality from the waning of Victorianism to the rise of European Islam, emphasizing complexities and contradictions in sexual desires and behaviors, ambivalences surrounding sexual freedom, and difficulties encountered in securing sexual rights.

GAIL LEVIN (Dist. Prof., Baruch, Art History), Lee Krasner: A Biography (William Morrow, 2011). Drawing on new sources and numerous personal interviews, Levin shows the painter Krasner, wife of Jackson Pollock, as an independent and resourceful woman of uncompromising talent and prodigious energy whose life intersected with and informed her art.

JUDITH LORBER (Prof. Emer., Brooklyn, Sociology) and Lisa Jean Moore, eds., *Gendered Bodies: Feminist Perspectives*, 2nd ed. (Oxford University Press, 2010). This reader focuses on how gendered relations, ideologies, and practices shape human bodies. The second edition incorporates new selections—including non-Western perspectives—on such topics as evolution and motherhood; breastfeeding; breast cancer; men’s height; and female suicide bombers.

WENDY LUTTRELL (Prof., GC, Urban Education), *Qualitative Educational Research: Readings in Reflexive Methodology and Transformative Practice* (Routledge, 2009). This anthology focuses on epistemological, intellectual, and ethical conflicts in doing social analysis and is designed to deepen students’ thinking about their qualitative research purposes, questions, and decision-making.

KISHORE MARATHE (Prof., Brooklyn, Physics), *Topics in Physical Mathematics* (Springer, 2010). Theoretical physics—relativity and quantum theories and later Yang-Mills—has helped to unite the estranged fields of mathematics and the sciences. Aimed at a wide audience, this book covers the background of both mathematics and theoretical physics and details their interaction.

CANDACE MCCOY (Prof., GC, Criminal Justice), ed., *Holding Police Accountable* (Urban Institute Press, 2010). Nine leading scholars of police work draw from seminal studies by James J. Fyfe, who found that administrative controls such as training, guidelines, and regulation could reduce deadly shootings by officers without adversely affecting law enforcement or crime rates.

ANTHONY PICCIANO (Prof., Hunter, Urban Education), *Educational Leadership and Planning for Technology*, 5th ed. (Prentice Hall, 2010). The new edition, designed for in-service and pre-service educators, provides theoretical and practical considerations for planning and implementing technology in today’s schools, including both administrative and instructional uses.

ANTONI PIZZA (Director, Foundation for Iberian Music; Adj. Prof., GC, Music), *Nits simfòniques* (Ensiola, 2010). A selection of the author’s concert program notes in Catalan, this volume provides listening guides to mainstream works of the orchestral, chamber, and solo repertoire as well as appreciations of lesser-known musicians. An extensive introductory essay discusses the history and genre complexities of concert program notes.

MARITSA V. POROS (Asst. Prof., City, GC, Sociology), *Modern Migrations: Gujarati Indian Networks in New York and London* (Stanford University Press, 2010). Gujarati migration flows span four continents, across several centuries; Poros reveals the inner workings of their social networks and how these networks relate to migration flows and speaks to central debates in the field about the economic and cultural roots of migration’s causes.

STANLEY A. RENSHON (Prof., Lehman, Political Science), *Obama and the Politics of Redemption* (Routledge, 2011). With extensive biographical, psychological, and political research and analysis, Renshon follows Barack Obama’s presidency through his first two years in office, assessing his advantages and limitations and arguing that underlying Obama’s ambition lies a need for redemption.
DAVID S. REYNOLDS (Dist. Prof., GC, English), Mightier than the Sword: Uncle Tom’s Cabin and the Battle for America (W. W. Norton, 2011). Reynolds takes a fascinating look at the cultural roots, political impact, and enduring legacy of Harriet Beecher Stowe’s revolutionary best seller. Reynolds also published Beneath the American Renaissance: The Subversive Imagination in the Age of Emerson and Melville (Oxford University Press, 2011 [1988]), a seminal resource on American literature, which is now back in print in a paperback edition with a new foreword by Sean Wilentz; and Uncle Tom’s Cabin: Or, Life Among the Lowly (Oxford University Press, 2011), a facsimile of the lavishly illustrated “Splendid Edition” issued for Christmas 1852, for which Reynolds provides a substantial introduction situating the novel within the world of ideas and images operative at the time.


ARTHUR K. SPEARS (Prof., Anthropology, City) and Carole M. Berotte Joseph, eds., The Haitian Creole Language: History, Structure, Use, and Education (Lexington Books/Rowman & Littlefield, 2010). This book is the first to deal with the central role of Creole in Haiti and the Haitian diaspora.

MARK SPICER (Assoc. Prof., Hunter, Music) and John Covach, eds., Sounding Out Pop: Analytical Essays in Popular Music (University of Michigan Press, 2010). Nine essays map the myriad styles of the pop-rock universe through detailed case studies that confront the music from a variety of perspectives—from historical to music-analytic, aesthetic to ethnographic.

JOSEPH N. STRAUS (Dist. Prof., GC, Music), Extraordinary Measures: Disability in Music (Oxford University Press, 2011). Approaching disability as a cultural construction rather than a medical pathology, this book studies its impact on composers, performers, and listeners with disabilities, as well as on music and the discourse about music.

NAN M. SUSMAN (Assoc. Prof., Staten Island, Psychology), Return Migration and Identity: A Global Phenomenon, a Hong Kong Case (Hong Kong University Press, 2011). This work of cross-cultural psychology explores many personal stories of return migration and the anxieties, anticipations, hardships, and flexible world perspectives of migrants.


JAN VALLE (Asst. Prof., City, Urban Education) and David Connor (Assoc. Prof., Hunter, Urban Education), Rethinking Disability: A Disability Studies Approach to Inclusive Practices (McGraw-Hill, 2011). This is a concise and practical guide to teaching inclusion in the classroom.

MONICA VARSANYI (Assoc. Prof., John Jay, Earth and Environmental Sciences), ed., Taking Local Control: Immigration Policy Activism in U.S. Cities and States (Stanford University Press, 2010). This volume offers views on the diversity of local immigration policies from political scientists, legal scholars, sociologists, and geographers.

DAVID WILLINGER (Prof., City, Theatre) and DANIEL GERould (Dist. Prof., GC, Comparative Literature, Theatre), eds. and trans., A Masterlinck Reader: Plays, Poems, Short Fiction, Aphorisms, and Essays by Maurice Masterlinck (Peter Lang, 2011). This is a compilation of works by one of the most important writers of the twentieth century, whose plays were integral to the Symbolist movement. The editors have included, in fresh translations, selections that show facets both exemplary and extraordinary of this Nobel Prize–winning author.

JAMES F. WILSON (Prof., GC, English), Bulldoggers, Pansies, and Chocolate Babies: Performance, Race, and Sexuality in the Harlem Renaissance (University of Michigan Press, 2010). This book shines the spotlight on historically neglected plays and performances that challenged early twentieth-century stratification of race, gender, class, and sexual orientation.

JOCK YOUNG (Dist. Prof., GC, Criminal Justice, Sociology), The Criminological Imagination (Polity Press, 2011). Young examines what’s gone wrong with criminology, drawing on a range of research from urban ethnography to sexology and criminal victimization studies, and makes a passionate case for a return to criminology’s creative and critical potential.

MARK ZUSS (Assoc. Prof., Lehman, Urban Education), The Practice of Theoretical Curiosity (Springer, 2012). This inquiry into inquiry itself documents curiosity as a sociohistorical force initiating research across the disciplines and offers a critique of the usually unquestioned philosophical, political, and ethical grounds for educational, scientific, and social research.
Computer Science: It’s Music to Google Exec Maggie Johnson’s Ears

With a bachelor of music, summa cum laude, in early music performance from the Boston Conservatory of Music and an M.A. in music history from New York University, Maggie Johnson (Computer Science, 1992) never pictured herself creating computer programs for a living—much less explaining software systems, programming language theory, and IT benchmarking. More likely, she thought, she’d be sitting at a keyboard of another sort for the bulk of her career.

Then, while working with a professor who was digitizing melodies of classical symphonies and developing algorithms to identify composers based on attributes of the melodies, Johnson had a revelation. “What I found fascinating,” she recalls, “is how similar programming is to the practice required to learn a piece of music. There’s a common ground in the persistence and logical reasoning needed, and the debugging issues inherent in both disciplines.”

Compelled by this discovery, Johnson was motivated to return to the classroom, obtaining her M.S. in computer science at the College of Staten Island and her Ph.D. at the GC when computer science was still a fairly new discipline here. For her dissertation she developed algorithms to automatically perform Bach fugues as three specific performers would, thus merging her interest in expert systems with that in music analysis.

Now director of education and university relations for Google, a huge part of Johnson’s job, she explains, involves running a two-week “boot camp” for new Google hires, getting those “Nooglers” up to speed as far as Google culture and technology goes. “In addition,” she says, “we have to stay finely tuned to what’s on the horizon so we can proactively provide the training and skill development needed, just in time.”

Also as part of her role, Johnson is responsible for outreach initiatives with computer educators and collaborates with research faculty globally on projects of mutual interest. “We have a small research award program that we run twice annually,” she says, “as well as other programs to support faculty doing cutting-edge research.”

In the years since she graduated from the GC, Johnson can attest, there have been significant changes in the field of computer science. One of these is the acknowledgment by many universities of its impact in other domains. Because of this, she says, “many universities now offer double majors, or major/minor degrees in areas that require significant knowledge of CS for success—such as economics, medicine, statistics, and bioengineering.”

Despite these major adjustments in the field, says Johnson, there are still many ways in which her CUNY education continues to serve her—most obviously in her university relations role at Google. Beyond that, she adds, “the discipline and focus required to obtain a Ph.D. are highly transferrable skills. And, of course, having a Ph.D. has opened many doors during the course of my career.”

—Jackie Glasthal
Earl E. Fitz (Comparative Literature, 1977), professor of Portuguese, Spanish, and comparative literature at Vanderbilt University, gave talks on inter-American literature at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign; McGill University/Vanderbilt University Initiative; and the University of Graz, Austria.

Gennifer Furst (Criminal Justice, 2006), assistant professor of sociology at William Paterson University, New Jersey, provides a comprehensive look at prison-based animal programs and an innovative approach to rehabilitation that draws on the benefits of human-animal interactions in Animal Programs in Prison: A Comprehensive Assessment (Lynne Rienner, 2011).

Ajay Gehlawat (Theatre, 2007), assistant professor of theatre and film at Sonoma State University, published his first book, Reframing Bollywood: Theories of Popular Hindi Cinema (Sage, 2010), which the Asian Journal of Communication has called “an interesting and solid attempt to fuse multiple theoretical influences into a coherent defense of the complexities involved in the study of contemporary Hindi cinema.”

Mark Goldblatt (English, 1990), novelist, columnist, book reviewer, and a professor at the Fashion Institute of Technology, published Sloth, a timeless love story with a “pulse-quicking mystery” (Greenpoint Press, 2010).


Carol Siri Johnson (English, 1995), associate professor in the department of humanities, New Jersey Institute of Technology, received the 2010 National Council of Teachers of English Award (NCTE) in Technical and Scientific Communication for The Language of Work: Technical Communication at Lobens Steed, 1810–1925 (Baywood Publishing Company, 2009), which illustrates how writing and literacy have become an essential part of the industrial process.

Krysia Jopek (English, 2001), an instructor at Westfield State University in Massachusetts, authored Maps and Shadows (Aquila Polonica, 2010), which is based on her family’s experience of forced deportation from Poland to Russia during World War II and juxtaposes poetry and prose. The book won the Silver 2011 Benjamin Franklin Award for Best Novel, which recognizes excellence in independent publishing.

Geoffrey F. Joyce (Economics, 1995), an associate professor of pharmaceutical economics and a health policy expert at the University of Southern California, provided expert commentary on Pfizer’s tough business strategies in “Plan Would Delay Sales of Generic for Lipitor” by Duff Wilson, New York Times Business section, November 12.


Natasha Kurchanova (Art History, 2005) received a nice accolade from Art Forum’s “Critics’ Picks,” which pointed to an exhibition she curated: “Who’s Afraid of Ornament?” at Nurture Art, Williamsburg, Brooklyn (April 23–May 29, 2010). Her article “Opsi Brik and the Politics of the Avant Garde” appeared in October 134 (Fall 2010), a journal of the Society of Contemporary Art Historians.

Valerie Ann Leeds (Art History, 2000), an independent curator and specialist on the work of Robert Henri, co-organized, with Jonathan Stuhlman, “From New York to Corrymore: Robert Henri and Ireland” at the Mint Museum of Art, Charlotte, North Carolina. The exhibition and its accompanying publication (Mint Museum, 2011) were the first to explore this noted American artist’s Irish themes within the context of his oeuvre. The exhibition traveled to the Georgia O’Keefe Museum, Santa Fe, and the Hyde Collection, Glen Falls, New York.

Catherine Liu (French, 1994) director of the University of California-Irvine’s Humanities Collective and an associate professor in film, media studies, and visual studies, published American Idyll: Academic Antielitism as Cultural Critique (University of Iowa Press, 2011), which argues that social mobility has ebbed.

Aleksandra Majstorac-Kobiljksi (History, 2010), a former Japan Foundation Fellow at Doshisha University in Kyoto, Japan, received a postdoctoral fellowship in the Department of History of Modern Science and Technology in East Asian Studies at Harvard University last spring.

Lloyd Makarowitz (Physics, 1974), chair of the department of physics, Farmingdale State College, received the State University of New York Chancellor’s Award for Excellence in Faculty Service for 2011. The award was conferred May 15 at the college’s commencement.

Hayes Peter Mauro (Art History, 2007) published The Art of Americanization at the Carlisle Indian School (University of New Mexico Press, 2011). This historical study analyzes visual imagery produced at the school as a specific instance of the aesthetics of Americanization at work.

Sarah McClelland (Psychology, 2009), an assistant professor at the University of Michigan, coauthored with Michelle Fine (Dist. Prof., GC, Psychology, Urban Education) “Sexuality Education and Desire: Still Missing after All These Years,” Harvard Educational Review (Fall 2006). Their study was featured in “Teaching Good Sex” by Laurie Abraham, New York Times Magazine, November 20.

J. Patrice McSherry (Political Science, 1994) was awarded her second Fulbright Senior Scholar Grant for a new project in Chile. In a departure from her long-term focus on political violence and state terror in Latin America, she conducted fieldwork in summer 2011 on the relationships between the Chilean New Song Movement and the popular political struggles and movements of the 1960s and 1970s. She was based at the Institute of Advanced Studies, University of Santiago.

Tetsuya Oshima (Art History, 2008), curator of Aichi Prefectural Museum of Art, Nagoya, Japan, has organized the largest exhibition of Jackson Pollock's work ever mounted in Asia. Oshima, who wrote his dissertation on Pollock, acquired loans from all over the world. From Iran's Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art, showing great curatorial and diplomatic skill, he acquired a 1950 masterpiece, a sixby eight-foot canvas unseen outside Iran since the revolution. "No American museum will be mounting such a wide-ranging survey in honor of Pollock's centenary," wrote Helen Hudson, director of the Pollock Krasner House and Study Center, in the Sag Harbor Express, November 10. The show will travel to Tokyo, Japan, after January 22.

Sara Palmer (Psychology, 1982), psychologist and assistant professor in the department of physical medicine and rehabilitation at Johns Hopkins University, published *When Your Spouse Has a Stroke: Caring for Your Partner, Yourself, and Your Relationship* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2011).


Carrie Pitzulo (History, 2008) published *Bachelors and Bunnies: The Sexual Politics of Playboy* (University of Chicago Press, 2011), which delves into the history of the magazine to reveal its strong record of support for women’s rights and the modernization of sexual and gender roles.

Dick Rauh (Biology, 2001), former president of the American Society of Botanical Artists Board of Directors, is widely recognized for his botanical paintings, which have earned him awards at the Royal Horticultural Society Flower Show in London and inclusion in such notable collections as the Lindley Library, London; New York State Museum, Albany; and the Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation, Pittsburgh. *Curly Dock Rumex Crispus*, seen above, won first prize in the 2011 Walter Brooks Memorial Watercolor Exhibition, Rowayton Arts Center, Rowayton, CT.


Ben Tyner (History, 2010) accepted a tenure-track job in the history department at Union College in Lincoln, Nebraska.

Eva Cristina Vásquez (Theatre, 2001) wrote *Carmen Loiatida*, a theatrical adaptation of the opera *Carmen* danced to the rhythms of salsa, merengue, and bachata, which played in Spanish with English subtitles at Teatro Círculo in New York, in May.

Debra Gonsher Vinik (Theatre, 1980), producer, writer, and winner of three Emmys, received her seventh Emmy nomination for *A Place for All: Faith and Community for Persons with Disabilities*. The interfaith program was previously given the highest honor in the Broadcast Programming Category from the DeRose-Hinkhouse Memorial Awards.


Song-Yu Yang (Biochemistry, 1984) coauthored and published the comment "Why so far the best microbial converting glucose to long chain fatty acids is the *E. coli* strain RB03?" on *Nature* (www.nature.com), which reports progress in producing biological fuels and alternative energy sources.

Maggie Zelner (Psychology/Neuropsychology, 2008), an adjunct professor at Rockefeller University and executive director of the Neuropsychoanalysis Foundation, curated an exhibit at the American Museum of Natural History called "Brain: The Inside Story." She is affiliated with the National Psychological Association and has taught neuroscience since 2003 at the yearly congresses of the International Neuropsychoanalysis Society, the Psychoanalytic Institute of Northern California, and the National Institute for the Psychotherapies.
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