

# THE BROOK

*"A ratio of failures is built into the process of writing. The wastebasket has evolved for a reason."*

## THE WRITING LIFE

*Reflections by*

**ROBERT REEVES**

**ROGER ROSENBLATT**

**LOU ANN WALKER**



## From President Shirley Strum Kenny

**C**ongratulations to the entire Stony Brook family on the celebration of our 50th anniversary. We have accomplished so much in such a relatively short time—50 years is a mere blink of an eye when compared to universities of similar stature. We have on our faculty Nobel laureates, and more than 100,000 graduates who have gone on to excel in every field of endeavor. We rank among the top 2 percent of universities in the world by the London *Times Higher Education Supplement*.



But although our past achievements make us proud, we have our sights set firmly on the future. The Turkana Basin Institute, a new research facility directed by Richard Leakey, is planned to be built in northern Kenya and southern Ethiopia. It will house a research program that will address the entire span of human evolution from our earliest ancestors to modern humans. This new initiative will provide the opportunity to involve Africans as key members and leaders of the research efforts.

Our new undergraduate School of Journalism, the first publicly supported undergraduate School of Journalism in either the SUNY or CUNY system, will train the next generation of newspaper reporters, editors, online news managers, designers, magazine writers, TV correspondents, producers, and anchors—the men and women who will lead journalism in the digital age. Students will learn not only the fundamentals from leading print and broadcast journalists, but they will also prepare to succeed in an evolving multimedia future, working out of our “newsroom of the future.”

Stony Brook is breaking ground in both the literal and figurative senses. Construction has begun on our Research and Development Park, with the first building, the Center for Excellence in Wireless and Information Technology, slated for completion in 2008. And at Stony Brook Southampton, this innovative new undergraduate college will focus on the most critical issue on earth today—the issue of environmental sustainability. Students will have an extraordinary opportunity to help shape our response to the global challenges we face.

Our first 50 years has been an exhilarating adventure. With your support and encouragement, the next 50 will be even better.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Shirley Strum Kenny". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Shirley Strum Kenny  
President, Stony Brook University

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**On our cover:** Photo by Matthew Klein

# What's New on Campus



President Kenny with Fulbright Association President Dr. Marilyn Berg Callander.

## President Kenny Receives Fulbright Lifetime Honor

President Kenny received the Fulbright Lifetime Achievement Medal at the Fulbright Association's 30th Anniversary and Lifetime Achievement Medal Dinner on March 8 at the Andrew W. Mellon Auditorium in Washington, D.C. Joining her as honorees were fellow Fulbright alumni Craig R. Barrett, Chairman of Intel Corp., and John Hope Franklin, the eminent historian, author, and Presidential Medal of Freedom recipient.

The Fulbright Lifetime Achievement Medal honors Fulbright alumni whose distinguished careers and civic and cultural contributions have sought to expand the boundaries of human wisdom, empathy, and perception. Recipients of the Medal show exemplary commitments to creative leadership and liberal education. Here, an excerpt from Dr. Kenny's speech:

"I grew up in Tyler, Texas. At 13, I left Texas for the first time to visit a friend who had moved to Shreveport. I really expected Louisiana, 76 miles away, to look different. I was disappointed; it looked just the same.

"But when I was 22, I boarded the *Queen Mary* for my Fulbright year. London did look different, felt different, smelled different. But very soon the British Museum felt like home. To be a regular in the reading room, greeted daily by the guards and the librarians, turning the pages of the quirky hand-pasted catalogs, returning every day to the volumes of newspapers from 1749, let me know that this really was my world.

"I meticulously read every scrap of material, scientific, religious, philosophical—everything—on the London earthquakes of 1749, which had figured so prominently in Fielding's novel *Tom Jones*. The librarians let me touch and open and read those 200-year-old books. I immersed myself in 1749 in the sermons, the plays, the poetry, the newspapers, the ads.

"My husband and I lived over a combined post office/mercator shop in Camden Town, where there were brawls every Saturday night; carrying our paraffin heater with us from one room to the other—we had two rooms—thinking seriously before dropping six pence to heat water for a bath in our frigid bathroom. We tested such delicacies as shepherd's pie and treacle tart and best of all, we went to the theatre two or three times a week—a shilling for seats in the upper gallery. Olivier in *The Entertainer*, Gielgud in *The Tempest*, Peggy Ashcroft in *As You Like It*. ...And then there were the vacation breaks. Bob and I traveled the British Isles and Europe, staying in hostels or once in a while sleeping in a barn. Sampling every museum and every ancient church and every bargain cafe. That year shaped us, not only our professional life, but our aesthetic sense as well. It could not have happened without the Fulbright grant.

"That was a while ago. Today American universities are rapidly increasing their own international programs. It is now up to us to spread such experiences to as many students as possible. At Stony Brook, we send students around the world.

"They can discover new species of lemurs in the rain forests of Madagascar or study ancient Roman architecture or experience modern China. They can join Richard Leakey to identify our oldest ancestors in the Turkana Basin or study linguistics in St. Petersburg.

"The Fulbright experience will always carry an importance and distinction that is unique. The program was built on the belief that international understanding is the way to world peace, and it is the young that can best effect that understanding. Now, more than ever, we realize that only collaborative efforts across international lines can help, indeed can save, our planet. Thank goodness the Fulbright Association takes this work so seriously."

## Strongwater New Hospital CEO

Hospital administrator Steven L. Strongwater, M.D., has been named CEO of Stony Brook University Hospital. Before assuming his new position, Dr. Strongwater headed John Dempsey Hospital at the University of Connecticut. As Hospital Director and Associate Dean for Clinical Affairs, he managed all clinical operations at UConn Health Center.



"Dr. Strongwater has the depth of experience in academic medicine and the strong administrative skills we sought," said President Kenny. "People rely on us to provide the highest quality of care, and he is the right person to make sure Stony Brook is second to none in that area."

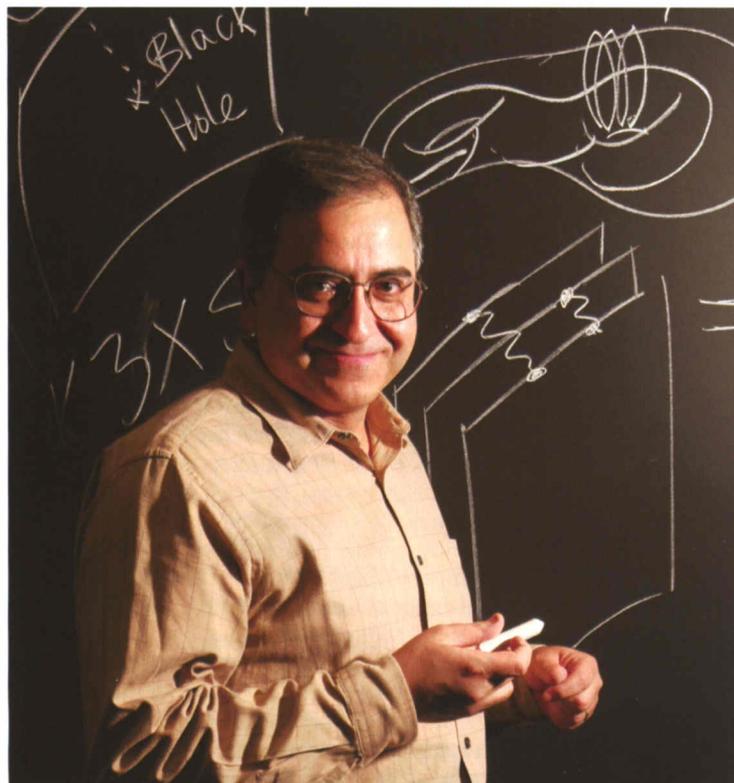
Among several accomplishments at UConn, Dr. Strongwater conceptualized and developed a patient safety center, the Collaborative Center for Clinical Care Improvement; ran the faculty practice plan; and served on numerous local and national boards. John Dempsey Hospital is part of UConn's Health Center, which has been recognized the past two years as a "Top 100 Hospitals® Performance Improvement Leader."

"Stony Brook is a remarkable hospital with an outstanding workforce and medical staff, and is supported by a thriving scientific research enterprise and a world-class university," Dr. Strongwater said. "That makes Stony Brook a powerhouse in the region, and our objective is to be the best possible hospital we can be."

Before joining UConn, Dr. Strongwater was Medical Director at the University of Massachusetts Medical Center in Worcester. He also was Professor of Medicine in the Division of Rheumatology and Immunology. He graduated from the University of Rochester *magna cum laude* with a degree in biology in 1974 and earned his M.D. with honors at the SUNY Upstate Medical Center in 1978. ■

# Research Roundup

**Cutting-edge research culled from Stony Brook's best and brightest minds.**



*World-renowned string theorist Cumrun Vafa participates in the Simons Workshop.*

## Pondering String Theory

For five weeks each August, Stony Brook's Math Tower becomes a nexus of astonishing thought and conversation as physicists and mathematicians from all over the world come together to talk about string theory. The Simons Workshop on Mathematics and Physics exerts a gravitational force that draws thinkers and luminaries from as far away as Brazil, China, and Japan, and from institutions such as Stanford and Princeton. Now in its fourth year, the workshop continues the tradition of lectures and unstructured small-group brainstorming that has been its signature and sets it apart from other renowned workshops on the subject.

"Most conferences involve more people over a much shorter period of time and receive significant federal funding," says George Sterman, Ph.D., Director of the C.N. Yang Institute for Theoretical Physics (YITP) and one of the organizers of the event. "People can present their results, but generally have no chance to do any real research. The Simons Workshop, on the other hand, is designed to be a real workshop. There is normally only one talk per day, usually in the mornings, and the rest of the time is spent in informal conversation among participants. In the afternoons I'll walk around and see small groups of people talking. That's one of the wonderful things about it."

Directed by Martin Rocek, Ph.D., of the YITP, in conjunction with the Department of Mathematics and guided by world-renowned string theorist Cumrun Vafa, Donner Professor of Science at Harvard University,

the Simons Workshop has spawned collaborations that resulted in new ideas that opened whole new fields in mathematics.

"Scores of projects begun at the workshops have led to research papers published online and in scientific journals," says Sterman.

String theory got its start in physics. It is an attempt to describe the fundamental laws of nature—the nature of matter and of the forces that hold matter together, including gravitational force. It tries to do this by a revolutionary generalization of the concept of elementary particles. As its name suggests, string theory replaces particles (which are like little points that move around) with tiny strings. The mathematics to describe these strings in large part had to be discovered and developed specially for that purpose, and much of the enthusiasm for string theory is on the part of mathematicians, for whom its eventual success as a description of nature would be a bonus, but not the primary aim.

About 75 people attend one or more weeks of the Simons Workshop every year, a population that includes a nucleus of senior researchers and a majority of young, rising scientists ranging from advanced graduate students to assistant professors.

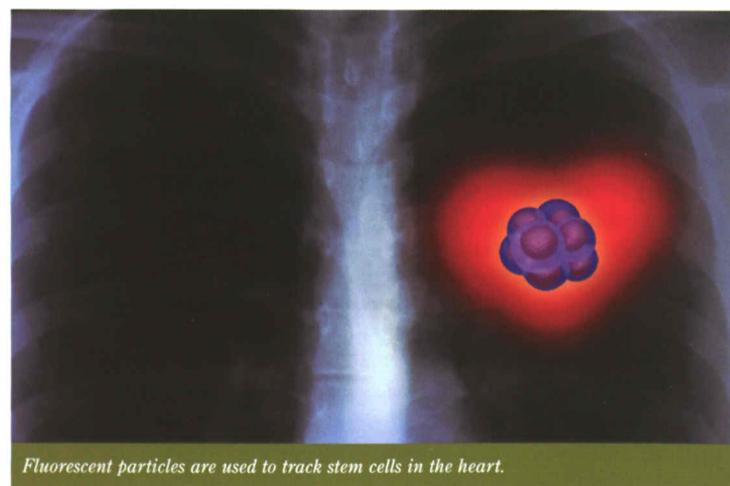
"The Workshop is very stimulating for all of us," says Dr. Rocek, who hosts a buffet dinner for participants in his home. "Cumrun loves coming here. Many projects have originated or developed here. One of this year's winners of the Fields Medal in Mathematics was a participant who did some of his work here and talked about his project. Our biggest problem is our success. It's hard to accommodate everyone who wants to attend."

The Simons Workshop is made possible by a generous grant from the Simons Foundation; James Simons is the former Chair of the Department of Mathematics at Stony Brook.

## Student Invents Stem Cell Tracking Device

A breakthrough invention by an M.D./Ph.D. student at Stony Brook has not only advanced stem cell research but earned her recognition as one of only 11 finalists nationwide selected for the 2006 Collegiate Inventors Competition. Amy Rosen, a 26-year-old student in the School of Medicine's Biomedical Engineering and Physiology and Biophysics program, invented a way to identify and track stem cells in heart tissue, solving a problem that has baffled scientists in cardiovascular research.

Her invention is part of a collaborative effort between researchers at Stony Brook and Columbia University to replace electronic pacemakers with a biological method. "Unlike skin cells, heart tissue cells can't divide and repair themselves," explains Amy. "Traditionally, when a certain region of heart tissue dies, electronic pacemakers have been implanted to stimulate the beating of the heart. One of the problems we are working on is to find a way to use stem cells as biological pacemakers. This project relies on being able to identify and track the stem cells after we deliver them to a living animal."



*Fluorescent particles are used to track stem cells in the heart.*

Amy's mentor, Ira S. Cohen, M.D., Ph.D., Leading Professor of Physiology and Biophysics and Director of the Institute of Molecular Cardiology, acknowledges that Amy's invention solves a universal problem for researchers in the field and has never been accomplished before. The method Amy developed involves filling the interior of stem cells with bright fluorescent particles called quantum dot nanoparticles, which allow investigators to track individual cells after delivery to the heart.

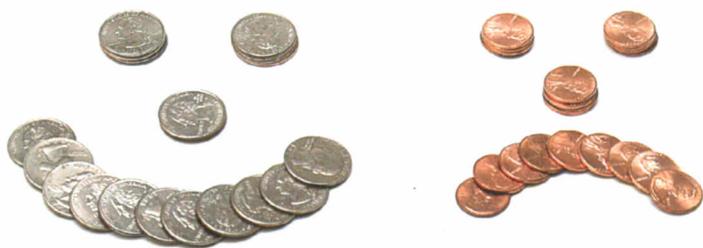
Amy is delighted and encouraged by the response from judges at the Collegiate Inventors Competition and fellow researchers at the American Heart Association's Third Annual Basic and Translational Science symposium held in Colorado last summer. She plans to continue her research in biomedical engineering. "My goal is to be both a physician and a scientist," says Amy. Being recognized as an inventor is undoubtedly a good start.

## Can Money Buy Happiness?

Will having more money make us happy? Most of us seem to think so. But a new study by behavioral scientist Arthur A. Stone, Ph.D., Distinguished Professor and Vice Chairman of the Department of Psychiatry, and colleagues from the University of California at San Diego, University of Michigan, and Princeton University, indicates that there's little correlation between happiness and finding the proverbial pot of gold.

"If you ask people a general question—'All things considered, how satisfied are you with your life these days?'—one of the ways they make judgments is that they tend to focus on external advantages, such as having a house or a boat," explains Stone. "In contrast to this approach, in the study we measured day-in and day-out happiness levels by asking people about their immediate happiness several times a day."

Published in *Science*, the study used pre-existing data sources and two methods of survey—the Ecological Momentary Assessment (EMA) and Day Reconstruction Method (DRM) to measure subjective well-being. EMA, which was pioneered at Stony Brook, involves questioning participants about their moods as many as ten times a day, and often uses specially programmed palmtop computers to capture such information.



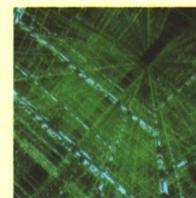
The study also identified the perceived effect of money on happiness as a phenomenon called a "focusing illusion." "People tend to focus on a single factor, such as an increase in income or a move to a sunny climate, to predict happiness," Stone explains. "They conveniently forget that the rest of their life will be as it is now, with children, spouse, and the problems and challenges they have today."

The study revealed that the belief that high income is associated with good mood is mostly illusory and that happiness is actually influenced by many factors, especially a person's day-to-day activities. "The pursuit of additional income may not lead to activities that increase happiness," says Stone. "Actually, it may translate into a higher frequency of less desirable activities, such as a long commute, working overtime, and spending less time at home with loved ones."

For the past 25 years Stone has been involved in behavioral medicine research and self-report work. He and colleagues Drs. Joan Broderick and Joe Schwartz, also in the Department of Psychiatry at Stony Brook, are continuing their research in this area with the PROMIS Network, a consortium of six universities including Stony Brook that have been awarded funds by the National Institutes of Health. Stony Brook received \$3.9 million for its part in the study. ■

## On the Horizon

**S**upercomputers are coming to Stony Brook. The first, a recent inhabitant of Stony Brook's Heavy Engineering Building, is helping researchers and graduate students dramatically accelerate their research computations. The Seawulf Cluster, named after the University's mascot, the Seawolf, and the Beowulf Linux cluster computer, was just the first step toward the acquisition of a major supercomputer—30 times more powerful than Seawulf—that will be housed at Brookhaven National Laboratory. The fastest supercomputer for general users in the world will anchor the New York Center for Computational Science and speed through calculations in the areas of biology, climate modeling, engineering, materials, medicine, nanotechnology, and other critical research and technology areas.



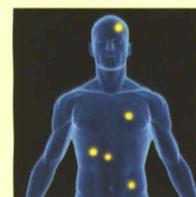
Supercomputing at SB

**A** \$1.8 million grant from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute will be used to remodel and equip a science laboratory, design new courses, provide fellowships for undergraduate students, and support undergraduates who spend a summer conducting research through Stony Brook University's Long Island Group Advancing Science Education (LIGASE). Dr. David Bynum, director of the program, reports that additional award components will allow biology majors from all over the country to spend a summer doing research with Stony Brook faculty and will also fund programs for public school teachers and science writers working in conjunction with LIGASE.



Summer research at SB

**C**ongressman Tim Bishop and Senators Charles Schumer and Hillary Clinton secured \$1.1 million in funding that will be used to establish the National Center for Cancer Prevention through Remote Biological Sensing. This will allow Stony Brook's researchers to expand their already groundbreaking research and make the University home to one of the premier cancer research centers in the country. The Center will study the use of remote biological sensor technology—wireless detectors inserted in a patient's body—to detect cancer before it becomes a significant threat and to deliver medication to the site of a malignancy.



Biosensors to track cancer

**M**ulti-drug-resistant tuberculosis has emerged as a serious threat—and not only in developing countries. Chemistry Professor Peter J. Tonge, Director of the Tuberculosis-Related Research Program at the Institute for Chemical Biology and Drug Discovery, and his team have received a \$3.16 million Cooperative Research grant from the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases/National Institutes of Health. Tonge and his collaborators have developed a series of compounds that are potent inhibitors of a validated TB enzyme drug target. The lead compounds show promising activity against both drug-sensitive and drug-resistant TB bacterial strains. The overall objective is to optimize these enzyme inhibitors through preclinical studies for the treatment of patients infected with drug-resistant TB.



Professor Peter J. Tonge

# Stony Brook's 50th! A Look Back as We Look Ahead.

## Then:



How do you spot a Stony Brook student? "Steeped in learning; ankle-deep in mud!" Stony Brook, growing like Topsy, was mired in muck.



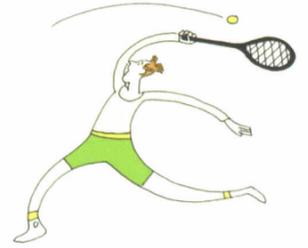
When Stony Brook tip-toed onto the academic scene, we didn't even have a full-time school nurse. If you suffered even a Charlie-horse on the weekend, you were out of luck.



Opening Day! (Way back when.) A few dozen students, a handful of teachers, three buildings, and a million dreams. (More coming true every day.)



Even with barely one test tube to our name, we dreamed big dreams of graduate-level research.



Haphazard pick-up games occupied more students' time than Stony Brook's formal sports line-ups. But the scales were tipping. And fast.

## Now:



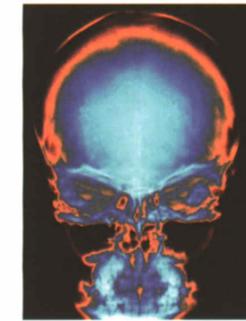
Today's campus, gloriously landscaped and manicured, is teeming with 22,000 students. (That's 44,000 feet, each without a speck of mud.)



At Stony Brook University Hospital, medical miracles are routine. Like the woman giving birth to triplets just before her heart operation. It really happened. And all four came out of it just fine.



In just 50 breathtaking years, Stony Brook ranks in the top 2 percent of the world's universities, the top 10 of public science universities, and one of the top 50 universities in all North America.



Nobel Prize winner Paul Lauterbur's work at Stony Brook led directly to the life-saving invention of nuclear MRI (Magnetic Resonance Imaging).

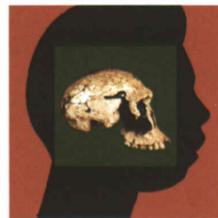


Stony Brook's dauntless Seawolves vault into the NCAA's Division I ranks, leading to SRO crowds at LaValle Stadium (the biggest arena in Suffolk County).

## Wow!



This fall we open Stony Brook Southampton! Brand-new, 90 acres on the Atlantic, consecrated to environmental and marine studies.



**TURKANA BASIN INSTITUTE**

Richard Leakey's modest program covers the entire evolution of mankind, from the million-year-old Turkana Boy to us. It covers many, many millennia, and uncovers a few surprises.

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Guess how many alumni we had back in 1957? Not a one, that's how many. O.K., guess how many Stony Brook alumni are running around America today? 125,000. That's how many.



Stony Brook's innovation of student/professor research teams, linked from freshman year to doctoral level, will bring forth the Nobelists of our next 50 Years. You'll see.

STONY BROOK UNIVERSITY



FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY

The biggest game on Long Island? Betting if our next 50 Years can top the first 50. Since the past is prologue, the smart money's on Stony Brook.

WRITERS ON WRITING FROM THE FACULTY OF THE SOUTHAMPTON WRITERS CONFERENCE *Yes. I'd like to write a novel and a play before I die. I will have to write fiction because of some former wives.* —FRANK MCCOURT

*As I'm writing, I'm always reader-conscious. I have one reader in mind, someone who is in the room with me, and who I'm talking to, and I want to make sure I don't talk too fast, or too glibly. Usually I try to create a hospitable tone at the beginning of a poem. Stepping from the title to the first lines is like stepping into a canoe. A lot of things can go wrong.* —BILLY COLLINS

*Some years ago, not long after I moved to Los Angeles from New York, I attended a television industry party. When a man asked my profession, I told him that I was a writer. He sipped his drink. 'Half-hour or hour?' he inquired. There was a long silence. 'Lifelong,' I replied.* —CAROL MUSKE-DUKES

*Writing is an exploration. You start from nothing and learn as you go... Writing is like driving at night in the fog. You can only see as far as your headlights, but you can make the whole trip that way.* —E. L. DOCTOROW

*Everyone thinks writers must know more about the inside of the human head, but that is wrong. They know less, that's why they write. Trying to find out what everyone else takes for granted.* —MARGARET ATWOOD

*At a certain point I had this breakthrough—I was really blocked and I started saying this thing to myself: 'You're the only person who can write this story.' And that signaled more confidence in my voice. I stopped trying to write like other writers...* —MELISSA BANK

*You'd be surprised how little of what occurs in my stories actually happened in real life. I've been a pathological liar since I was five.* —MATT KLAM

*I teach [my students] how essential it is to give ourselves time for the silent and greedy reading we discovered as children, the reading we do just for ourselves, the reading that lets us emerge from a book dazed. Awed. Transformed.* —URSULA HEGI

*[After publishing The Joy Luck Club] I went through a terrible period of feeling that I had lost my privacy, that I had lost a sense of who I was. I was scared by the way people measured everything by numbers: where I was on a list, or how many weeks, or how many books I had sold. By the time it came to the second book, I was so freaked out, I broke out in hives. I couldn't sleep at night. I broke three teeth grinding my teeth. I had backaches. I had to go to physical therapy. I was a wreck!... That crisis helped me to define what was important for me. It started off with family. It started off with knowing myself, with knowing the things I wanted as a constant in my life: trust, love, kindness, a sense of appreciation, gratitude. I didn't want to become cynical. I didn't want to become a suspicious person. Those were the things that helped me decide what I was going to write.* —AMY TAN

*The marvelous thing about the writing process: You don't know when and how a memory, a scrap of conversation overheard, an allusion or image, is suddenly going to surface and work itself into your story.* —BHARATI MUKHERJEE

*America: The only country in the world where failing to promote yourself is regarded as being arrogant.* —GARRY TRUDEAU

*When I hear that readers have been affected by something I've written, it's a relief. I finally have come to no longer fear that I'm going to have to go to law school someday.* —MEG WOLITZER

*After days, months, years of struggling with the blank page, I found a surprisingly simple solution to writer's block. I stopped thinking of myself as blocked and began thinking of myself as cured.* —ROBERT REEVES

# THE WRITING LIFE

WRITERS HAVE ALWAYS ENJOYED HOLDING FORTH on the hardships of the writing life. This is a topic that crops up pretty much whenever authors gather over drinks to commiserate about, say, imbecilic reviews, or tiny advances, or a rival's success, or a publisher's neglect, or a public reading attended by an audience of four, or a Q&A session where someone asks: When your book is translated into several languages, who decides which languages? Or: Can I have your agent's home phone number?

So, with some justification, writers complain about their lot. And, curiously enough, the complaint most often advanced—the hands-down winner, the progenitor of most authorial whining—is not the lack of cooperation from the outside world, but the lack of cooperation from within: Writing is difficult. Indeed, Thomas Mann named difficulty itself as the essence of a writer's identity. "Writers are people for whom writing is more difficult than it is for other people."

So why do we do it? Here, the writing teachers—and the taught—share their stories of pain and glory, of inspiration and perspiration. For, as Roger Rosenblatt says: "Only when you write do you know what you think, what you believe. Eventually you even begin to know who you are, God help you." BY ROBERT REEVES

# Beet: Chapter Nine

By Roger Rosenblatt

*The following is from Beet, a satirical novel about American colleges, to be published later this year by Ecco/HarperCollins. The hero of the novel, Peace Porterfield, is a professor of English, which is ordinarily enough to mark one for disaster. If that were not sufficient, he also believes in what he does. Naturally, he suffers. The novel is generally an account of Peace's travails at the hands of fools and crooks, but there is one resting point in the story that shows him as a teacher, and tries to indicate to the reader what real teaching consists of. This chapter is that resting point.*

**T**he better teachers at any level have the powers of invention and imagination. These powers are not the same and are not equal. An imaginative teacher is always inventive, but an inventive teacher is not necessarily imaginative. Between the two, invention is a comparative cinch. It's a three-eared camel or a farting Sri Lankan ambassador or a three-eared Sri Lankan camel schooled in international diplomacy who farts out of one of his three ears. That's all it is.

But imagination? Ah. Imagination is enthralled only by the camel, the ordinary humpy, durable, malleable-mouthed, stupor-eyed, superior camel. Wow. The imaginative teacher walks around the animal, dreams into it, worries about it aloud, in front of a classroom. The students overhear him as he worries. What's so fascinating, Professor? Professor? Can you hear us? Professor?

The imaginative teacher is thought itself. And to come upon such a person in a lifetime is to find, well, gold.

Peace Porterfield was an imaginative teacher. As a boy, he would dream into a painting in his parents' house—a 19th-century English landscape his father had picked up in a junk shop to cover a wall over a mantelpiece. In the center of a green valley stood a whitish castle that included several towers, and another tower, gray and shadowed off to the side. Behind the castle stood a spread of vague blue-gray hills and a sky of lighter blue-gray in which puffy white clouds swung upwards in a fuzzy comma. The day looked bright and yet also about to rain. To the left and right of the castle were trees full of leaves of resplendent greens, which grew more distinct the closer one came. Several trees tilted to the right as if pushed by a wind. Three black sheep occupied the middle distance, one grazing, two lying on the sward. And a boy and a girl walked on a path that seemed made of marl or some crumbly material, and ended halfway up a hill. He wore a hat and a blue shirt. She wore a red shirt and a white skirt shaped like an inverted egg cup. In the foreground were the brambles of a hedge, over which young Peace would climb while calling out to the boy and girl and telling them to wait up because he had questions to ask them.

That's what he would do as a teacher when looking into a poem or a novel or a story. He would translate himself into the object of his interest, using an instinct that was a boon to his students and a saving grace to himself, especially when he was down or disgruntled or feeling out of place—a time like the present.

It was seven days into November. He had left the faculty meeting on the day of the MacArthur Five decision two days earlier without speaking to his colleagues who, though they had voted against him, would have spent another hour privately congratulating him on his moral courage. He had gone to be with Livi and the children. And in the days following—whenever he could wrest himself from the inter-

minable and ineffectual CCR [Committee on Curricula Reform] meetings, which had grown testier by the day, and bright with savage hauteur—he devoted himself to family and to the classroom.

"May I ask you a sophomore bull session question?" Livi said to him one evening when they stood together scraping the dishes. "What are you looking for in your life, Peace? What do you want—I mean, besides us?"

"To be useful"—without hesitation.

"Useful to whom?"

"To my students, so they'll be able to live in the world more alertly, or interestingly, I guess. I'm not crazy about big lofty pronouncements."

"I know. But, the way everything is going, I thought it was a question you might ask yourself." She kissed his cheek. "Just trying to be useful."

In any given year he would teach a wide range of courses in subjects that simply interested him, and because they did, interested his students as well. Max Byrd had followed Peace from course to course, from a lecture course in the Metaphysicals, to seminars in Dr. Johnson, Conrad, and African-American novelists, to a conference group on the Irish Renaissance—a crazy salad, except that these various subjects came alive in the hands of a teacher of the first rank who gave Max and all serious students the goods. This fall, Peace was teaching but one course, since he'd taught three courses last spring, hoping to free time for writing. But the Trustees' assignment intervened. His one course—Modern Poetry—had become almost excessively important to him, like a safe house.

A bleak and dank Tuesday began with a lacerating phone call from Bollovate [chairman, Board of Trustees], pushing him about the CCR's progress; a shouting complaint from the curator of the College Museum that several pieces of African art were missing, and did Peace know anything about it and what was he going to do about it (as CCR chairperson, Peace had somehow become the catch-all for every College gripe and tantrum); a reading of his notes on yesterday's meeting of the CCR (in which Lipman proposed that the new curriculum be built around "The Great Gray Lady: How *The New York Times* Gives Us the World"), and another corrosive call from Bollovate.

Before heading off to the College, he noticed an old textbook of Livi's lying open on the kitchen table. The page was dog-eared and underlined at a description of a proximal row carpectomy, a procedure to remove three of the eight bones in the wrist, to relieve pain. A so-called salvage procedure, it is usually done to correct a botched surgery. The underlined portions detailed the procedure step by step. He took note of the book and the page as one does of something unusual that may be of importance later, but then slips one's mind. Unconsciously he frowned.

**“Original language,” Peace told them at the first meeting, “is what distinguishes the real writer from the writer.”**

But at last at noon he hiked up the collar of his brown woolen sports jacket against the damp cold, traced the flight of a pair of grackles bisecting a long line of gray mist, and walked across the Old Pen from the Library to Mallory, where the English department taught its classes. Mallory was one of the two aggressively modern buildings on campus, ghastly yet expensive, and was created to look more like a bunker than a bunker. The cinderblock walls were painted brown and had so gritty a texture that if one brushed exposed skin against them, it came away bloody. Ceiling lights were pinholes. Linoleum was the color of rotted lettuce. The bathrooms had automatic toilets with defective electric eyes that caused them to flush every thirty seconds whether in use or not. And the stories were unnavigable. The first floor was the lobby and also the mezzanine, but not the entrance. One entered the building on the third floor, then took five minutes to decide if one wanted to go up or down.

Yet Peace was comfortable there. He closed the classroom door behind him, sat at the greenish table that served as a desk, and looked out upon the faces of 23 people with whom he would talk for the following 50 minutes about nothing but the likes of Eliot, Pound, Elizabeth Bishop, Auden, Yeats, Milosz, Ransom, Penn Warren, Snodgrass, Roethke, Hart Crane, Sylvia Plath, Robert Lowell, and today's subjects, Marianne Moore and Richard Wilbur.

Modern Poetry was conducted as a discussion group, though the class was larger than Peace would have ideally had it. He was a well-known softy, and many more students applied than the limit noted in the course catalog, figuring Professor Porterfield would always make room for one or two extra, or ten. Twice a week they met to give close readings to poems, usually organized around a common theme, but not always. He wanted to teach them how to read a poem, and more, to absorb the language of poetry so that they might learn to generate original language on their own.

“Original language,” Peace told them at the first meeting, “is what distinguishes the real writer from the writer.”

He quoted Twain's dictum about the difference between the word and the right word being the difference between the lightning bug and the lightning—not to tell them something about the poets they were looking at, but something about themselves. As thinkers, as people, and, for a few perhaps as future writers, they should only aim to be in the lightning business. The word as opposed to the right word. He would show them a quatrain from Eliot's “Sweeney Erect,” but with a word omitted—“suds”—what the darkly comic, beer-drinking, lecherous Sweeney wipes around his face as he prepares to shave. What right word did Eliot choose? he asked them. No, not soap; it

gives you nothing but the shave. No, not cream; it only suggests the lechery. Same with “foam,” yet foam comes closer because it gets to the beer. And maybe to madness. And why is “suds” the right word? Because it contains the comedy, the lechery, the shave, and the beer. That's why.

He did not want to turn the students into poets. He wanted to make them see the world the way the poets saw it, at least to see it that way some of the time. Because some of the time, the poet's way of seeing the world was clearest.

And this was the point as it applied to Peace himself. His wife and his best friend harassed him for not living in the world as it is—in Bollova's world, when one came down to it. Yet from Peace's perspective, teaching and learning were as real as the world got. That may have been his problem. But it was also true. This is as good a place as any to note that if Livi was right and he resembled *Candide*, it was *Candide* with brains.

“We must learn to imagine what we know,” he told his class. “That was Shelley's idea. Do you see it? There is the life of facts and the life of dreams. And they come together in the imagination. Learn what has happened—history, biology, anything. Then imagine what you know and it fills the facts with noise and light. Whatever you saw is the same but different all at once. Because you looked. Only you. You looked.”

How often Max Byrd wrote to his folks in Alabama that Professor Porterfield was his reason for staying in college. What he was learning about computers he could pick up anywhere. Were it not for Porterfield, he'd have come home long ago to work for his dad. Max was heavily in debt with student loans, and in many ways preferred his parents' life, minus the poverty, to much of the esoterica and the claptrap hurled at him at Beet. Only Professor Porterfield seemed to speak for the value of learning, indeed for the value of growing up. “And he talks like a real person, Dad. You'd like him.”

Even the grumpiest and most skeptical adored him. Why would they not? Peace was on their side. He didn't pander to them any more than he pandered to his colleagues, though the students seemed to better intuit his motives. He didn't agree with them automatically, and tell them how wonderful they were. He didn't say everything they wrote was “brilliant, but...” or “splendid, yet...” He never called student poems “interesting.” And once in a while he accused his classes pointblank of sloppy thinking and “English major bullshit.” He didn't do anything overt to win them over. And he could not have cared less about student evaluations given at the end of every course, though his always shot through the roof. As he'd told Livi, all he wanted was for

them to be more alert, more aware, more expressive and generally smarter when he finished with them than when he began.

And in the interests of caring about them, he cared about his subject. He cared so much about literature he worried about it aloud. “Is *Juno and the Paycock* a tragedy? Is *Riders to the Sea*? How could they both be tragedies? Why did Ellison write nothing of value after *Invisible Man*? Did John Donne suffer? What were Conrad’s politics? Does a real writer have politics? Why would Dr. Johnson never speak of death?” And so forth. The students overheard him, and beheld the imaginative teacher. So deep would he go in his private-public investigations, sometimes he would look up suddenly in class and blink like a baby as if surprised to see anyone else in the room.

“Mr. Porterfield?”

“Yes, Sarah?”

“I didn’t get the Marianne Moore poem at all.” Others nodded. They were about to take on “The Mind is an Enchanting Thing.”

“Let’s try to figure it out,” said Peace. “The mind is an enchanting thing. How so, Max?”

“Because it is complicated?” said the boy.

“In what way is the mind complicated?”

“It moves in many ways,” said Jenny.

“And it moves quickly. It darts,” said Leslie, a music major. “Like Gieseking playing Scarlatti, Moore writes. She means the mind is quick and agile.”

“Quick and agile,” said Peace, considering their words. “But so what? Everyone knows that the human mind is quick and agile. Why write a poem about it?”

“Why write a poem about anything,” said Jenny, evoking a wave of light laughter.

“Yeah,” said Peace. “Why do poets write poems?”

“To give you something to teach,” said Lucky, a black kid from Andover, who could be counted on to say things like that.

“Precisely,” said Peace, with a smile. “And what do I like to teach, Lucky?”

“Deep meaning,” said the boy in a deep dramatic bass, eliciting another laugh.

“Quick and agile. And deep,” Peace said. “What makes a mind worthwhile? The use of a hand can be quick. The eyes can be quick and deep. The voice, too.” He imitated Lucky: “‘Deep meaning.’ But Marianne Moore is writing about the mind, which is the engine of the hands and the eyes and the voice, the center of everything. What makes that organ special to the poet?”

“I can think of another organ that is quick, agile and deep,” said Lucky.

“I’m sure you can,” said Peace. “But try this once to stay on the subject.” More laughter, then a meditative silence.

“It can change,” said Jenny. “The mind can change.”

Peace read aloud the last lines of the poem: “‘It’s not a Herod’s oath that cannot change.’ Good for you, Jenny. And what was Herod’s oath? Why would it have been better had Herod changed his mind?” Several students offered the correct answer. Peace leaned back, clapped his hands once above his head and gave them the thumbs-up. “What?” he teased. “You’ve read the Bible? What heresy is next? The Greeks?”

So the class progressed, from Marianne Moore’s poem to Richard Wilbur’s “Mind,” which was on the same subject but took a different turn. The mind is as blind as a bat, said Wilbur, that flaps about in the dark. Yet once in a glorious while, it can find a new flight path and “correct the cave.”

**They talked and talked. They looked up, they looked down—heads bent over books. So open, so private. This was the beauty of teaching—**

They talked and talked. They looked up, they looked down—heads bent over books. So open, so private. This was the beauty of teaching—under the wheedling and the grappling, the strange loveliness of the enterprise. In their jeans, their baseball caps, even their nose rings and their saucy tattoos, the kids were, to him, breathtaking.

“Professor Porterfield?” asked Jane of the dramatically long blonde pigtail. “You’re always talking about original language. But I don’t really understand.”

Peace nodded, acknowledging his use of the term might have been vague. “All these poets we study,” he said. “They reached into themselves to find words that were theirs alone. They took the effort to do this, not because they wanted to show off, or to baffle readers

with strangeness for its own sake. They wanted to discover who they really were, what they really believed. And their own language would tell them. The words they used—the words we’re talking about today—they could have come from no one but Moore and Wilbur.”

Jane was still searching. So, evidently, was Max, and if he was not getting this, no one would. On the spot, Peace came up with an exercise deliberately geared toward heartbreak.

“I am going to do something now,” he told them. “And when I do it, I want you to write. Don’t think about it. No throat-clearing. Go with whatever comes to mind.”

With that he stood, walked to the classroom door, opened it, and closed it. Then he looked back at the students looking at him. He opened the door again, and closed it again. The tumblers in the lock were heavy, clear, and loud.

“That is what I’d like you to write about,” he said. “The sound of a closing door.”

They went right at it. When fifteen minutes had passed and the class time was nearly over, he called upon several students to read aloud what they had put down.

Robyn wrote something that began: “In my father’s house there were no doors.” She went on to tell that she had grown up on a Navy base, and she and her mom lived in a trailer. “No walls,” she said. “And no doors.”

Lucky, not a joke in him now, wrote of clinging to his father’s pants cuffs as the old man was walking out on him and his mother, brothers and sisters, for good. He had left on a Sunday. After the door had closed forever, the family had sat down to eat blueberry pancakes.

Lucille wrote of having been hauled off to a police station in her hometown in Louisiana when she was twelve; she had heard a jail door close. Prentice wrote of the breakup with his partner, who had told him, “We just don’t click.” But, “the door clicked.”

Peace leaned forward and gave them a hard look. “Original language, you see, has nothing to do with arcane or fancy words,” he said. “Most often it is composed of the simplest words. But they come from you, only from you.”

At ten to one the class was over, but everyone kept his seat a moment longer. “That’s another thing about the mind,” said Jenny, gathering her books and talking to no one in particular. “It can make itself sad.”

“Yes it can,” said Professor Porterfield.

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# Can Writing Be Taught?

*Through teaching, this published writer taught herself.*

I was a young assistant editor at *Esquire*, when the top editors changed. I'd been editing columns by John Simon and Alfred Kazin, among others. They were out. I was expected to reinvent myself. My new immediate boss wanted me writing articles on pop culture. He had an idea about Woody Allen's fixations on women in Annie Hall. Pre-DVD, I went to showing after showing, memorizing the dialogue. I wrote the assigned essay. No go. I wrote it over and over, following the editor's instructions carefully. Still no go. "You'll never be a writer," he announced after my seventh try. Devastated, I believed him.

But that didn't stop my foolhardy behavior. Cut to: More editorial jobs. Articles. For *The New York Times Magazine*, *The New York Times Book Review*, *Parade*, *Allure*, other magazines, reviews, children's books. Then I quit my editorial job to write a memoir. For every project, I asked: "What should I read to put me in the mind for this piece?" The memoir was published, well-reviewed, big publicity tour—I was thrilled. My husband (a writer) and I moved to a small town on the East End of Long Island. One day, I was astonished to see the *Esquire* editor at a neighbor's party. I stayed in conversation way too long with a befuddled psychologist, while trying to edge toward the door. The hostess, not knowing the *Esquire* connection, pulled me over for an introduction. "So your book got published," he said. Trying to let bygones go, I nodded and smiled. "But you haven't sold it to the movies, have you?" This from a man who'd never written anything more than a photo caption, yet he had hit his mark squarely.

Cut to: After the memoir I published some fiction and poetry, but I wanted to get better. My agent suggested a writing workshop run by a famous fiction editor from another major magazine. It was expensive. A 100-mile schlep each way. But I was determined. And every Wednesday evening, I came home in tears. "Quit," my husband said. "No, my agent told me this would be good for me." I was convinced I'd discover the white light at the end of the long tunnel of sufferance. "Quit." After the last session, devastated again, I telephoned Famous Fiction Editor, asking for advice. "You were one of the best I've had," he said.

"So why do I feel so miserable?" I didn't write again for two years. Two whole years.

Somehow I managed to type my way back into print. Then found myself teaching. My philosophy? The Hippocratic Oath: First, do no harm. Could writing be taught? I hadn't learned much from *Esquire* Editor and Famous Fiction Editor except why try hard if I was convinced I'd be strafed at the knees? Why drop words on a page when all I could think about was the reaction? Why reveal myself to thunderous criticism? I needed an antidote.

Through teaching I would teach myself—that was my initial prescription. What worked when the writing worked? Obviously reading the good stuff. I encourage as much reading as I can, including reading particular to each student's work. But reading isn't everything.

I analyze students' writing to see when it clicks. I'll admit there have been plenty of times when I despair after reading a student's short story or stab at a novel. That might be when I ask students to try a different form. Poetry instead of prose. Memoir instead of short fiction. We are lucky that our M.F.A. program doesn't pigeonhole people into one genre, as do many other programs. Often it isn't the writing that doesn't work, it's the format for that story. Reframing the work reframes the writer, refocuses the conflict. We go on to individual techniques: Analyzing the word, parsing on the sentence, loving the paragraph. This semester I've been quoting Francine Prose's wonderful book, *Reading Like a Writer: A Guide for People Who Love Books and For Those Who Want to Write Them*. She writes: "The only way I was able to trick myself into writing a first novel, as well as the first short story I published that I liked (as opposed to the first story I published) was to write both the novel and the story as stories within stories, narratives told by one character to another. Eavesdropped upon by the reader, the storytellers and their audiences appeared at the beginning and end of the works, and occasionally throughout, to interrupt and comment upon the action." For me "trick" is the operative word. The students and I find ways to trick ourselves, to discover the tricks of other writers—the importance of the last word in a story, for example, or the way the sounds of language echoed the action. What I find fascinating is that often, after we've workshopped a piece, when the writer is allowed to talk again, out comes the most significant detail, or what the writer was aiming at in the first place. The writer had to write to find out what he or she was thinking, or had to admit what he or she was obfuscating.

Perseverance: I can't teach it, but I can ask for rewrites. The most gifted writers of sentences and paragraphs aren't always the success stories. The students with drive, the ones for whom writing doesn't come easily, are often just as successful. Perhaps I can't teach writing, but I can encourage the exploration of craft, help people develop a gimlet eye toward their work, and I certainly applaud passion. Back to my medical analogy: The metaphorical extension, of course, is that writing is an illness. But that's not the case. Writing can provide a cure.

Remember Famous Fiction Editor? I'd been too ashamed of my response to mention the disastrous workshop to my agent. One day a long time later his name came up—she was livid. "But I thought you liked him—you sent me to his workshop," I said. "What?! Why didn't you quit? He's an [series of expletives deleted—better suited to a novel]." Ah, how my agent can write.

We are lucky that our M.F.A. program doesn't pigeonhole people into one genre, as do many other programs. Often it isn't the writing that doesn't work, it's the format for that story.

*Lou Ann Walker's memoir, A Loss for Words, won a Christopher Award. Her other books include Hand, Heart & Mind. Her fiction and nonfiction have appeared in many publications including Allure, Esquire, Life, The New York Times Magazine, O, The Oprah Magazine, Parade, and The Writer. The author of several screenplays, she is a member of the Writers Guild of America. She is also a full-time faculty member of the Graduate Writing Program at Stony Brook Southampton.*

# Hum 6

*How one class helped a student swap his jockstrap for a lifelong love affair with writing.*

**T**he first thing I ever wrote was in sophomore year in high school, a handwritten, single-paged book report on *The Old Man and the Sea*—yes, the novel judged by students everywhere to be the ideal union of brevity and literary respectability. My high school was in Alabama, then as now football crazy, and crazy, too, with the roiled drama of social change in mid-sixties Birmingham. My teachers included a few dedicated souls who even now inspire in me a kind of *Reader's Digest* admiration, along with a smattering of lunatics who in those days were a fairly familiar sight at the front of a classroom. As a student, whatever reservoir of talent I possessed was largely and (to my mind) happily untapped. My primary pleasure in life was sports, and I existed comfortably among that group of athletes who, as they say, wear their jockstraps on the outside.

As I recall, my single-page contribution to Hemingway scholarship was the sum total of my writing obligation for sophomore year. I must have been pleased with the result, because I turned in the same book report both junior and senior years.

And so my life as a writer began—modestly.

A few months later, September 1969, I produced my second piece of writing, an essay on Keats's "Ode to Autumn," under dramatically different circumstances. Through a quirky sequence of events, I found myself a thousand miles away in Cambridge, Massachusetts, a freshman at Harvard, taking a famous Harvard course—Humanities 6—from a famous Harvard professor, Reuben Brower. Brower was a New Critic, a one-time student of Robert Frost's, mentored by F.R. Leavis and colleague to I.A. Richards, and he taught writing by teaching poetry. Hum 6 required two essays a week for the entire year, each a close reading of a single poem. Brower's method was simple: a student could not advance any impression of a poem that could not be traced back to the words on the page, the specific language of the poem itself. This simple rule yielded surprisingly dramatic results, not just for me, but for hundreds of students who were introduced to literature by Brower and Humanities 6. First, by keeping to the poem, we were not permitted to express any wild opinions about life or the world that popped into our heads. It was therefore impossible to fake an understanding of the poem. Muddled thinking would be exposed with humiliating clarity. We were forced to pay close attention to the meaning of words—I for the first time—and for some of us that evolved into caring about language and then, possibly, a belief that ideas were not only important, but fun. Finally, if we worked at it, we could develop a prose style that was spare and precise and capable of

expressing fine shades of meaning. To my mind, there is still no better way to teach writing.

The year was transformative. By the end of spring term and the final exam for Hum 6, I had switched my college major from Government to English and begun to harbor secret aspirations to be a writer.

I should pause here to describe the serendipity that took me from Birmingham to Hum 6 in the first place, which I suppose is the essential twist in this narrative. First, a warning: Anyone caught in the brutality of the present-day college admissions process will likely find the account annoying, if not depressing.

One day during the fall of my senior year in high school, I was pulled aside by an assistant football coach, the most foul-mouthed among an epically foul-mouthed staff of coaches, a man who inexplicably doubled as our guidance counselor. Coach (we addressed them all as "Coach") may have been capable of discretion in certain advising situations, but I was a football player, so his counsel for me consisted of one or two variations on "Reeves, you piece of shit. You got an effing plan or not?"

On this particular day Coach had pulled me aside to mention he'd received a letter over the summer and since thrown it away. The letter had said something or other about a Harvard recruiter passing through Birmingham, and something or other about scheduling appointments for any students who might have some interest in applying to Harvard. Coach had a general impression that I'd done well in classes, which is why the discarded letter suddenly came to his mind. Even though the Harvard recruiter had already come and gone, Coach thought he

might now take the opportunity to fulfill his obligations as a counselor.

At that time the South still existed on the periphery of national life, and applying to Harvard would have seemed as exotic as applying to the Sorbonne. This had nothing to do with intelligence or academic promise. I had classmates who would have thrived at the prestigious universities of the North, but the possibility simply did not present itself.

Even so, when Coach mentioned Harvard, something clicked in my head. I had a vague impression that Harvard oozed prestige, and I'm sure that the idea of applying there appealed to my vanity. I was an outsider, yes, in so many ways unformed and untutored, but for all that I never lacked confidence. So, with equal parts naivety and arrogance, I simply assumed Harvard would accept me. How could it not?

**The year was transformative. By the end of spring term and the final exam for Hum 6, I had switched my college major from Government to English and begun to harbor secret aspirations to be a writer.**

It was the only place I applied. Later I learned the outlandishness of my assumption, and came to understand, too, my good fortune that Harvard understood the value of casting a wide net, known then as “geographical distribution.” Looking back, too, I suppose my being so full of myself didn’t hurt either.

That September I boarded my first airplane and flew to Boston. When I landed, I took my first taxi ride to Cambridge. Not wanting to risk getting lost, I insisted that the cabbie drop me off directly in front of my dorm. Of course, I didn’t know at the time that there’s only one motor entrance to Harvard Yard, lightly used and hard to spot. We circled the Yard three times. I ran up quite a tab before I found my way inside.

And so began the year of Hum 6—no less a first flight—and of a year that for better or worse shaped my life forever. My new interest in literature soon brought me to Shakespeare and the Renaissance and to Sidney’s notion of poetry as the highest calling, a god-like creation of an alternate world. It was a time when Cambridge was alive with a sense of urgency about who would write the next great novel. I heard John Updike read that year, and Norman Mailer, and Robert Penn Warren (and afterward, with an insider’s pride, I would let drop that because of his hair, Warren’s nickname was “Red”).

My rising ambitions were a secret of course. I was reserved in class. My Southern accent was pronounced—not Sling Blade pronounced, but pronounced—and I didn’t want to call attention to myself. One of Brower’s graduate assistants in Hum 6, who hadn’t heard me utter a single word in class, rewarded me with my first bit of praise. He handed back an essay, saying, “So you’re the one...” Writing became for me what it has been for so many others, the great equalizer.

On the inside I was prone to self-dramatization, and I impetuously declared—gulp!—that I would rather fail at writing than succeed at anything else, oblivious then to the top-heavy load of irony that accompanies such a declaration.

The bad news was that as a college freshman I exchanged my jockstrap for a pack of cigarettes. My softly romantic notion of myself as a haunted, self-destructive poet would hold sway for almost a decade. After that delusion lifted, unfortunately, the cigarettes remained. The good news was that through writing my sense of the possibilities for my own life was dramatically and forever enlarged.

Now, after a life devoted more or less continuously to writing and teaching writing, I still look back on that year, and sometimes put the story of Hum 6 to use as an encouragement to my students,

especially those who are, as I had been, outsiders in some way, first-generation college, or lacking in academic preparation of one kind or another. My best memories of teaching recall those students—with accents, perhaps, from Boston or Brooklyn or Bangladesh—and those moments when a poem would be regarded with puzzlement, then sudden interest, and a week later an essay handed in that convinced me something worthwhile had happened. A step had been taken.

I should mention one final legacy of Hum 6, an unintended consequence of the elevated notion of the writer’s art so frequently inspired by Brower’s course. To believe that writing is the highest

calling is to invite a lifetime of self-doubt about one’s worthiness to answer the call. Pondering the high standard Brower had in mind, one Hum 6 alum was moved to speculate not how many books Brower’s students had written, but how many books they had failed to write.

My own exalted view of writing, too, has carried with it an acute awareness of my shortcomings, my limitations, my weaknesses. Writing has been difficult for me, even painful, and the most sobering difficulty of all is this: Success with one novel, or story, or poem doesn’t make the next one any easier.

A few years ago, I came across Thomas Mann’s wry definition of a writer, and it seems to me exactly right: “Writers are people for whom writing is more difficult than it is for other people.” Despite the invocation of “difficulty,” there’s

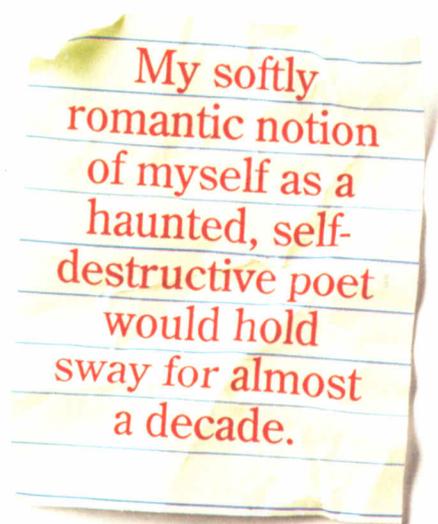
more than a little pride hovering around that statement. Writers may suffer, yes, but it’s a suffering they have chosen, and it is an honor to have been called to it.

To this day, I will stare at the blank page, and if I sit there long enough, the frustration will mount, yes, but so will the excitement. And if I sit there even longer, for a jump-start, I may even revive the curses of my old Coach/Counselor in Alabama. “Reeves, you piece of shit. You got an effing plan or not?”

And if I’m willing to sit there even longer, the gods eventually smile, and the next word comes to me, and I’m joyfully on my way.

Editor’s note: Reeves’ senior thesis on Philip Sidney was *summa cum laude*, won the LeBaron Russell Briggs prize, and was published by Harvard University Press.

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MARGARET ATWOOD



MELISSA BANK



BILLY COLLINS



E. L. DOCTOROW



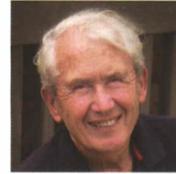
CAROL MUSKE-DUKES



URSULA HEGI



MATT KLAM



FRANK MCCOURT



BHARATI MUKHERJEE



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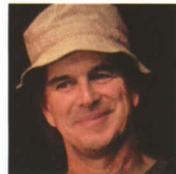
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For more information on the M.F.A program in Writing and Literature, or the Southampton Writers Conference, visit the Web site at [www.stonybrook.edu/writers](http://www.stonybrook.edu/writers)

\*Pending New York State Department of Education approval

By Jenna Browning

# A Spring Break to Remember

Stony Brook students spend their 'down time' rebuilding a city.



Stony Brook University students, in partnership with Habitat for Humanity, helped build new homes in Katrina-ravaged New Orleans.

When the blows struck by Hurricane Katrina still flooded the media waves and the outrage toward the lack of response was at its highest pitch, Stony Brook students organized a trip to rebuild houses in New Orleans. After raising the requisite \$30,000 to partner with Habitat for Humanity and fund the trip, 45 students endured the 26-hour bus ride to New Orleans. Jenna Browning, '07, penned these reflections after this first-ever Alternative Spring Break Outreach (ASBO). A second ASBO group returned to New Orleans this year.

**B**efore we left, we were told countless times that we were about to embark upon a "life-changing" experience that we would "remember for the rest of our lives." None of us really took those words, clichéd and redundant, to be much more than just something people said. However, there *has* been a profound change in each of us, and it's just now surfacing as we encounter everyday situations and are struck by how much our perceptions have changed.

Driving through the Eighth and Ninth Wards of New Orleans, we passed through miles upon miles of city road amounting to not much more than a pile of rubble. With our own eyes, we saw the situation for what it really was—eight months after the hurricane hit and only hundreds of houses rebuilt out of the 100,000 or so destroyed; thousands of people living in tents and FEMA trailers, with not nearly enough of either to go around; a pile of dirt instead of a levee; and a surprising lack of government presence.

At the store, where shingles and paint were the hottest commodities, we overheard the small talk between acquaintances—"Are you going to rebuild?" and "I'm sorry for your loss." There was an unmistakable undercurrent of tenderness and compassion among the folks of New Orleans that I hadn't detected before in

the passersby's conversations of my hometown. We caught a glimpse of a community re forging bonds that had long since been forgotten in the pre-storm humdrum of busy, everyday life.

Our experience as student volunteers was incredibly gratifying—people were constantly thanking us for donating our time. The church we stayed at, though having recently lost a third of its congregation and struggling to pay the electric bills, houses and feeds hundreds of volunteers each month. People in New Orleans were so impressively kind. And when they saw us—students giving up their spring break to help rebuild their shattered community—it seemed for an instant that those deadpan eyes sparkled with something akin to hope.

## Our Part in a Global Community

We saw firsthand the miles upon miles of deserted suburban houses, destroyed and silent, like beacons threatening the American dream, so reminiscent were these skeletons of our own neighborhoods. It was impressed upon us all that there are forces greater than man, life-changing forces that remind us of our fallibility and physical weakness as individuals and as a society. We were fortunate enough, as student volunteers, to have the opportunity to build something in the face of so much destruction. However, the three houses we worked on made a strikingly miniscule impact on the destruction that the city is dealing with.

The 45 of us returned together to the church each night, bruised and tired and salty. We cooked together. We cleaned together. We explored together. We became a family. We asked questions and we spoke to the locals, eager to hear everyone's story. We danced and sang on Bourbon Street and we inspired each other by sharing our different perspectives.

This trip assembled a diverse and talented network of Stony Brook students who are now also builders, foundation layers, team mem-

*"We were fortunate...to have the opportunity to build something in the face of such destruction."*

bers, leaders, activists, and friends. All of us have taken from this experience a strong sense of pride and accomplishment in ourselves and in each other. We know that we are part of a student community, a local community, a national community, and a global community. We need to do our part in each of these with equal fervor—nothing is twice removed from us and every place is our own backyard.

You hear often about the quiet before a storm, but I am addressing the quiet *after* the storm. There is so much happening in the city of New Orleans that is not in the news. It is our responsibility as student leaders to be proactive, to question what the media tells us and not merely accept the best possible scenario because it makes our lives easier. In a time when people affected by Katrina are relying mainly on Americorps and other volunteer organizations to get their city rebuilt, it is so important that those of us who *can* volunteer or contribute something, *do*. We need to identify ourselves as members of a human race—accountable to all people. The city of New Orleans is projected to take at least 10 to 15 years to rebuild. I will not let the people of New Orleans be forgotten. ■

*Jenna Browning, '07, graduates with a double major in French and Linguistics and a minor in International Studies. She served as Vice President of the National Society of Collegiate Scholars on campus, one of the founders and E-board members of the Alternative Spring Break Outreach organization, and an Americorps Education Award recipient.*

By Glenn Jochum

# The Turnaround Coach

**Rick Sowell believes the men's lacrosse team has what it takes to go all the way—and he wants to be the one to get them there.**

**F**irst-year Lacrosse Coach Rick Sowell has made a career out of rebuilding teams, and Seawolves fans are eager to know if he can do the same for Stony Brook. Sowell has been part of many quick turnarounds, beginning with his high school lacrosse team at Horseheads High School in Horseheads, New York, which, in its first year, won only five games. Just two years later, when Sowell was a senior, it boasted 13 victories.

Then in 1984 and 1985, when he was on the lacrosse team at Washington College, Sowell helped lead his team to a Division III final. Later, he was a three-time All-Pro for the

Baltimore Thunder of the Major Indoor Lacrosse League.

Of all his accomplishments, though, he is proudest of guiding a Dartmouth team he inherited to besting Princeton, the No. 2 team in the country in 2003. That meant a trip to the NCAA tournament and the Ivy League crown, the first one for Dartmouth in 38 years.

Sowell is always up for a challenge: The Seawolves are picked to finish third in the competitive America East this year, one of many reasons the 42-year-old Sowell left his

head coaching position at St. John's University after he had revitalized that program in a three-year period. Sowell's goal is to make the NCAA Tournament and to win the America East Conference, and he says that Stony Brook has been on the cusp of doing just that for the past few years.

The Seawolves were tested right away on February 24 when they took on the defending national champion Virginia Cavaliers at home and lost 15-7. But they showed mettle by bouncing back soundly to defeat Harvard, 13-8, on March 3, and then a highly ranked Denver University on March 10, hanging on for an 11-8 victory.

Although the team lost some of its offensive firepower from last year, including the high-scoring threat of Jason Capadora and Adam Marksbury, Sowell is encouraged that a strong nucleus will afford balance, good decision-making, sound fundamentals, and accurate shooting.

There is a bevy of players to help ease the loss of Capadora and Marksbury. Senior goalie Brendan Callahan has returned to his All-American form, exhibited as a freshman, after missing his sophomore year and turning in a solid season last year.

Junior midfielders Ryan Hughes and Owen Adams should also be stellar, and Adams, a tremendous athlete, is being converted to an

offensive player. Sowell is counting on junior attackmen Bo Tripodi and Rhys Duch to help lead the scoring attack.

Still, talent can take a new coach and a team only so far. "I learned at an early age that a good work ethic can take you a long way," he said. Sowell knows that with this much parity in the America East, the best chance his team has of winning it is to stay healthy. "A bad injury could change things in a hurry," he said.

Barring that, Sowell's experience molding teams into contenders gives him a good shot at becoming the architect of another success story, this time at Stony Brook University. ■



*"I learned at an early age that a good work ethic can take you a long way."*

—RICK SOWELL



Sowell's goal—to make the NCAA tournament and win the America East Conference.



PHOTOS: (FAR LEFT) GLENN JOCHUM, DAVID ROBERTS

# Events Calendar

## June

**Saturday, June 9, 4:00 pm to 6:00 pm**

### **A Taste of Summer**

*Stony Brook University Center for Wine, Food, and Culture*

*Stony Brook Southampton, Chancellors Hall*

A Taste of Summer will put you in the mood for the Hamptons' favorite season. This walk-about tasting reception will focus on the best and freshest flavors from our local vintners, farmers, and bakers. Tickets: \$25. To order, call (631) 632-9404, or reserve tickets online at [www.stonybrook.edu/winecenter](http://www.stonybrook.edu/winecenter)

**Thursday, June 14, 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm**

### **Ancient Grains for Modern Meals: Talk and Tasting**

*Stony Brook University Center for Wine, Food, and Culture*

*Stony Brook Manhattan*

*401 Park Avenue South (28th St.), 2nd Floor*

Lorna Sass, an expert on the use and value of whole grains, will reveal her discoveries for getting all their flavor and nutrition with easy, family-friendly techniques. Lorna's talk will be preceded (from 7:00 to 7:45) by a grain and wine pairing reception, with sample tastes of three unusual grain recipes from her new cookbook, *Whole Grains Every Day Every Way* (Clarkson Potter, 2006). Tickets: \$20. Call (631) 632-9404, or reserve tickets online at [www.stonybrook.edu/winecenter](http://www.stonybrook.edu/winecenter)

## July

**Saturday, July 14, 7:30 pm**

### **"Music Southampton" presents Anthony Dean Griffey, tenor**

*Avram Theater, Stony Brook Southampton*

The first performance in the "Music Southampton" series features tenor Anthony Dean Griffey, who has captured critical and popular acclaim with opera companies and orchestras worldwide. For ticket information, e-mail [Linda.Merians@stonybrook.edu](mailto:Linda.Merians@stonybrook.edu)

**Thursday, July 19 to Saturday, July 28**

### **12th Annual Stony Brook Film Festival**

The Stony Brook Film Festival presents independent films in competition as well as premieres of major films. Directors and actors are on hand to introduce films and conduct question-and-answer sessions after screenings. Full-access film passes are \$55; individual tickets, \$7; \$5 for students and senior citizens. For a complete film schedule and other festival activities, call (631) 632-ARTS or visit [www.stonybrookfilmfestival.com](http://www.stonybrookfilmfestival.com)

**Monday, July 23**

### **12th Annual Seawolves Golf Classic**

*Port Jefferson Country Club*

Benefitting the Charles Gordon Heuser Scholarship Endowment and Stony Brook Athletics, the \$250 fee includes golf, lunch, and dinner. Contact Sam Kornhauser at (631) 632-7198 or [Sam.Kornhauser@stonybrook.edu](mailto:Sam.Kornhauser@stonybrook.edu)

**Saturday, July 28**

### **Film Festival Closing Night Film and Alumni Membership Reception**

*Charles B. Wang Center and Staller Center for the Arts*

Mingle with fellow cinephiles at a pre-film reception featuring Asian food and drinks. Then settle in next door at the Staller Center's 1,000-seat theatre for the festival's closing night film.

### **16th Annual New York Yankees vs. Baltimore Orioles Game and Stony Brook Alumni Reception**

*Oriole Park Camden Yards, Baltimore, Maryland*

Enjoy a ballpark dinner and the company of your fellow alums as you watch two of the country's finest teams play ball!

## August

**Saturday, August 4, 7:30 pm**

### **"Music Southampton" presents Kristine Jepson, mezzo-soprano**

*Avram Theater, Stony Brook Southampton*

American mezzo-soprano Kristine Jepson has appeared at the Metropolitan Opera, Teatro alla Scala, and Santa Fe Opera Festival, among other companies. For ticket information, e-mail [Linda.Merians@stonybrook.edu](mailto:Linda.Merians@stonybrook.edu)

**Wednesday, August 15, 7:30 pm**

### **"Music Southampton" presents Liz McCartney, Broadway cabaret**

*Avram Theater, Stony Brook Southampton*

Broadway veteran Liz McCartney has had major roles in "The Phantom of the Opera," "Dance of the Vampires," and "Mama Mia." For ticket information, e-mail [Linda.Merians@stonybrook.edu](mailto:Linda.Merians@stonybrook.edu)

## Save the Dates

**Tuesday, September 25**

### **Human Evolution Symposium Convened by Richard Leakey**

This year's Symposium focuses on *Australopithecus* and the diversity in this most successful early hominid. For more information visit [www.stonybrook.edu/tbi](http://www.stonybrook.edu/tbi) or send an e-mail to [turkanabasin@stonybrook.edu](mailto:turkanabasin@stonybrook.edu)

**Monday, October 8 (Columbus Day)**

### **Raymond M. Downey Memorial Golf Outing**

Proceeds from the day support the Stony Brook Football program. For information contact Sam Kornhauser at (631) 632-7198 or [Sam.Kornhauser@stonybrook.edu](mailto:Sam.Kornhauser@stonybrook.edu)

**Saturday, October 20**

### **Wolfstock 2007: A Homecoming Tradition**

*Athletic Fields and Kenneth P. LaValle Stadium: The Seawolves vs. Maine*

Fun times with old friends, fine food, and fierce football.

**Thursday, November 15**

### **Distinguished Alumni Awards Dinner**

*Flowerfield, St. James*

Celebrate the achievements of our outstanding alumni while enjoying great food, live music, and a silent auction.

*For more information, unless otherwise specified, call the Alumni Relations Office at (631) 632-6330 or visit [www.stonybrookalumni.com](http://www.stonybrookalumni.com)*

# Class Notes

## 1960s

**Vincent F. Gallucci, '63 (B.S.)** is the Wakefield Professor of Ocean and Fisheries Sciences Director, Center for Quantitative Science, School of Aquatic and Fishery Sciences, at the University of Washington. He also heads up The Shark Research Lab ([www.fish.washington.edu/research/sharks/](http://www.fish.washington.edu/research/sharks/)).

**Paula F. Hertz Leeds '68 (B.A.)** has been a French teacher for 21 years. She is teaching at Hickory High School and was recently recognized by The Teacher Excellence Center for excellence in teaching.

## 1970s

**Ken Yasukawa '71 (B.S.)**, Chair of the Biology Department at Beloit College in Wisconsin and an expert on red-winged black-birds, contributed to a memoir by **Robert A. Levy '72 (B.A.)** about his adventures with one such charismatic bird in *Club George: the Diary of a Central Park Bird-watcher*.

**Gail R. Satler '72 (B.A.)** wrote *Two Tales of a City: Rebuilding Chicago's Architectural and Social Landscape, 1986-2005*. Satler received her B.A. in Sociology and Psychology from Stony Brook and her Ph.D. in Sociology from the CUNY Grad Center. She is Professor of Sociology at Hofstra University.

**Craig A. Tracy '73 (Ph.D.)** received the 2007 Norbert Wiener Prize in Applied Mathematics.

**Michael S. Goldstein '74 (B.A.)** was nominated for the Congressional Angels in Adoption Award by Congresswoman Nita Lowey. The award was presented to him this past September in Washington, D.C.

**Veerabhadran Ramanathan '74 (Ph.D.)**, a Distinguished Professor of Climate and Atmospheric Sciences, and Director of the Center for Atmospheric Sciences at Scripps Institution of Oceanography, University of California, San Diego, was elected to the American Philosophical Society last year.

**Eugene Allan Schlanger '76 (B.A.)** saw his first volume of poetry, *September 11 Wall Street Sonnets and Other New York City Poems*, published by Editions Underbahn Ltd. in Paris. The fifth edition is available in a bilingual French-English edition. Visit [www.underbahn.net/wallstreetpoet](http://www.underbahn.net/wallstreetpoet)

**Claudia L. Koppelman '79 (B.S.)** is co-author of *When You Don't Fit the Mold, Make a New One*, a book from the Massachusetts Medical Society that contains the personal stories of 22 women physicians—the roads they traveled and the obstacles they faced on their way to becoming medical doctors. She was also honored by The Society with its Committee Chair Service Award, an honor recognizing exceptional leadership service to the Society.

**Jay A. Schoenfeld '79 (B.A.)** is the Director of Government Relations for HIP Health Plan of New York.

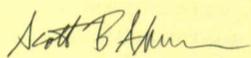
## A Message From Our Alumni Association President

**T**his past fall your Alumni Association was very busy with three major alumni events. First there was Wolfstock 2006: Alumni Homecoming. The event was jam-packed with fun things for our alumni and their families to do. The Alumni Food Pavilion featured delicious tastes from Long Island's restaurants, vineyards, and breweries. The Kids Zone provided engaging activities, shows, and crafts for the whole family. The University Expo Center provided a means for alumni to reacquaint themselves with professors and departments. And before a Homecoming crowd of 6,688 at Kenneth P. LaValle Stadium, the Seawolves defeated the Albany Great Danes as the University's new Marching Band made its debut.

Then there was the Fifth Annual Alumni Golf Classic. This event, rescheduled from the spring due to bad weather, was sold out. With the beautiful fall foliage as a backdrop, alumni and friends navigated the exclusive fairways of St. George's Golf & Country Club next to the Stony Brook University campus. Immediately following golf everyone enjoyed the cocktail hour, dinner, and silent auction. All proceeds from this event are used to support Alumni Relations, and this year's event broke all records.

Lastly, we had our 24th Annual Distinguished Alumni Awards Dinner, which celebrated the accomplishments of five alumni who have demonstrated extraordinary commitment to the University, to knowledge, and to the public's service. The 2006 honored alumni are Michael Manoussos, Distinguished Alumni Benefactor Award; Gene Mundie, Distinguished Alumni Award for University and Community Service; Peter J. Remch, Distinguished Alumni Award of Excellence; Carole L. Weidman, Distinguished Alumni Award; and Michael Zeitlin, Distinguished Alumni Award for Innovation.

This year the University is enjoying a yearlong celebration of its 50th Anniversary all year long. Make a point of coming to an event you have never been to before. I think you will be pleased that you did.



Scott Abrams

**Robert J. DeBrauwere '87 (B.A.)** ran the New York City marathon for the third time. He was running with the New York Police Department and was at the start line with Lance Armstrong. He has been a type-1 diabetic for almost 30 years and runs marathons and participates in endurance athletic events.

**John J. Donohue '87 (Ph.D.)** has joined Albertus Magnus College as vice president for academic affairs. He will also serve as a professor of social sciences there.

**Kevin M. Lastorino '87 (D.D.S.)** has joined WolfBlock as a partner in the Health Law Practice Group in the firm's Roseland, New Jersey, office.

**Charles A. Flinton '88 (B.A.)** recently published his first book, *Engaging Resistance*.

**Pamela Rathburn-Ray '88 (M.S.)** is an assistant professor at Suffolk County Community College. She is also the staff education and assistant director of Maternal-Child Health and Ambulatory Services at Saint Luke's and Roosevelt Hospital in New York City. She is also involved with the UHF Grant Project at Long Island College Hospital.

**John Modonia '89 (M.A.)** and his wife **Paula Peterson '92 (M.S.W.)**, along with their baby Jonathan, of East Moriches, have initiated a campaign to bring attention to Stony Brook's Child Life Program as a legacy to their late son Johnny. The Modonias lost their first son to T-Cell non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma in 2005, at the age of five. The Child Life Program at Stony Brook University Medical Center provides therapeutic, educational, and recreational activities to meet the emotional and developmental needs of hospitalized children. The fundraising efforts continue in Johnny's name. For more information, contact the Child Life Program at Stony Brook University Medical Center at (631) 444-3840.

### 1990s

**Catherine Nelson '90 (B.A.)** is volunteering for The Hospice of Florida Botanical Gardens. She is married and has three Boston Terriers.

**Ravi Kumar Korlipara '91 (Ph.D.)** works in consulting engineering, primarily in environmental, with ancillary services in civil, chemical, structural, and software.

**Peniel E. Joseph '93 (B.A.)**, a professor in Stony Brook's Department of Africana Studies, recently published his first book, *Waiting 'Til the Midnight Hour: A Narrative History of Black Power in America* (New York, Henry Holt, 2006). This book has been hailed by leading scholars in history and the humanities as the most authoritative ever on the subject and has received national attention. He also recently published an op-ed in *The New York Times* ("Black Power's Quiet Side," June 19, 2006) and the cover essay in the *Chronicle Review* ("Black Power's Powerful Legacy," July 21, 2006).

### 1980s

**Lawrence L. Friedman '80 (B.A.)** has worked since 1990 at the New York State Insurance Fund as a senior attorney. He graduated from Duke Law School in 1983 and is admitted in Florida, New York, and North Carolina to practice law.

**Justin O. Schechter '81 (M.D.)**, an assistant clinical professor of psychiatry at the Yale University School of Medicine and supervisor in the Law and Psychiatry Division, has been appointed by Governor Jodi Rell to serve as a member of the Psychiatric Security Review Board (PSRB) in the state of Connecticut. He has also been appointed as an associate fellow of Silliman College at Yale University.

**Marlaine Cragg Teahan '81 (B.A.)** has joined Foster Zack Little Pasteur & Manning, P.C., as an associate attorney practicing in the areas of estate planning, trusts and estates, and estate and gift tax. She is a member of the Michigan and New York Bar Associations, and is on the Council of the State Bar of Michigan Probate and Estate Planning Section.

**David G. Curran '83 (B.A.)** is the CEO and president of Data Communique. He graduated from Boston University Law School in 1986.

**Natalie Fitterman '84 (B.A.)** recently changed careers from computer programming and analysis to teaching English. She is pursuing her Ph.D. at Stony Brook.

**Marie I. Ciacco Tsivitis '84 (B.S.)** was recognized by the Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology for Excellence in Chapter Leadership at the annual Educational Conference in Tampa, Florida, this past June.

**David N. Louis '85 (M.D.)**, a neuropathologist and a pioneer in deciphering the complex molecular structure of tumors, has been named chief of the Massachusetts General Hospital Pathology Service.

**Serge Troyanovsky '85 (B.S.)** is now a director in the Equities and Derivatives group at BNP Paribas in New York City. He specializes in structuring and marketing Equity-Linked products.

## SB's New Director of Alumni Relations

If you were at Homecoming in the fall, you may have already met Ann Thompson, our new Director of Alumni Relations. Before taking the position at Stony Brook in September, Ann was Director of Alumni Clubs and Programs at the University of Massachusetts Amherst for 11 years. At UMass she and her event staff oversaw 30 regional alumni clubs throughout the country in addition to organizing Homecoming, reunions, and other alumni events.



One of the first things Ann wants to accomplish at Stony Brook is to establish regional alumni chapters around the country, beginning in California, Florida, New York City, and Washington, D.C. She also hopes to get more alumni volunteers active in campus programs and events. Prior to UMass, Ann was part of the Alumni Association at Boston College, where she earned a B.A. in Business Administration in 1991. We welcome Ann and her family to the Stony Brook community.

"I am pleased and honored to join the Stony Brook family," said Ann. "I look forward to working with our Alumni Association Board of Directors, departments on campus, and our schools and colleges to improve and increase the level of engagement and support of our alumni. The future is bright for Stony Brook, and our alumni are an important part of that future."

**Nichole F. Graves-McLeod '95 (B.S.)** married Scott McLeod in August 2003. She was a teacher at Boys and Girls High School in Brooklyn for eight years. She was honored by *Who's Who in America's Teachers* five times. Nichole received her M.S. degree in Social Work from New York University in May 2006.

**Josephine S. Wang '95 (M.D.)** is having a second child, a son.

**Bryan Digirolamo '97 (B.A.)** was a detective with the Washington, D.C., Police Department from 1997 to 2004. Since then he has been a special agent with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives.

**Jonathan P. Scott '98 (Ph.D.)** published a book with the University of Missouri Press titled *Socialist Joy in the Writing of Langston Hughes*.

**Loraine K. McCray '99 (M.S.)** is an ESL teacher, Girl Scout leader, church worker, and mother of two. She is happily married to a fellow Stony Brook alum.

### 2000s

**Maria L. Trinkle '02 (M.A.T.)** is a chemistry teacher and a research director.

**Elena Machado '03 (Ph.D.)** and Rafe Dalleo, both Stony Brook alums, were mar-

ried on July 22, 2006, and celebrated their wedding with many other alums. They both work as assistant professors in the English Department at Florida Atlantic University.

**Bessie Ortega '04 (M.S.)** will be receiving the Social Worker of the Year Award. She is also the associate director of community relations for underserved communities at Stony Brook University Medical Center.

**Madeleine E. Fersh '05 (M.D.)** is engaged to Jeffrey Ciccone, also a Stony Brook University School of Medicine Alumni.

**Angela Moy '05 (B.S.)** won an MP3 Player through an Alumni Association event.

**Terry Robert Hamblin '06 (Ph.D.)** is a professor of history and economics at SUNY Delhi.

**Robin G. Mayr '06 (M.S.W.)** passed her L.M.S.W. licensing exam.

### In Memoriam

Melvyn J. Rodriguez '71 (B.E.)

Robert R. Salvi '72 (M.A.L.)

Michael A. Barrett '74 (M.A.)

Theresa A. Bohlinger '74 (M.A.L.)

Thomas Toscano '75 (M.A.L.)

Arlene Deborah Wysong '75 (M.S.W.)

Philip A. Dundie '76 (M.A.)

Gail R. Schweid '76 (B.A.)

### Got News?

Let us and your fellow classmates know what's new in your life. Send your Class Notes to [alumni@stonybrook.edu](mailto:alumni@stonybrook.edu) or visit [www.stonybrookalumni.com](http://www.stonybrookalumni.com) to submit your notes online.

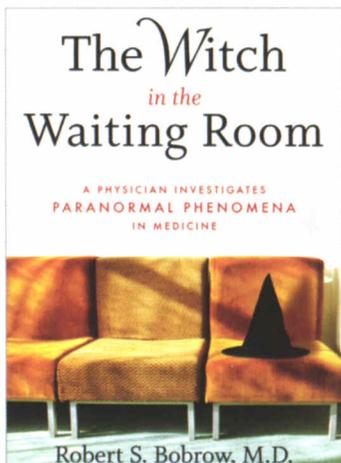
## Donor Spotlight: The Goldstein Family Gives Back to Stony Brook Athletics



The 6,000-square-foot Goldstein Family Student-Athlete Development Center was made possible by the generosity of Stuart Goldstein ('74), an All-American squash player at SB who made a significant donation on behalf of his family in support of the facility. The Center is adjacent to the Sports Complex Atrium, and it accommodates more than 425 student-athletes as they pursue their academic goals on a daily basis. The space features a computer lab, a study hall/multipurpose room, a career resource/library area, several private tutor rooms, and offices for the academic advising staff. Pictured, left to right, Stuart Goldstein's son Darin, Director of Athletics Jim Fiore, Stu Goldstein, and President Kenny at the ribbon-cutting ceremony for the Center last semester.

# Brookmarks

By Sherrill Jones

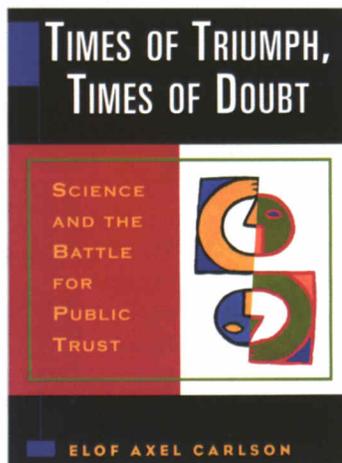


## The Witch in the Waiting Room: A Physician Investigates Paranormal Phenomena in Medicine

by Robert S. Bobrow, M.D.,  
Clinical Associate Professor,  
Family Medicine

2006, Thunder's Mouth Press

Oliver Sacks meets *Medium* in this serious yet entertaining exploration of paranormal activity in medicine—as documented in peer-reviewed medical journals—by a respected physician and medical professor. Citing case studies and analyses from medical journals, Dr. Bobrow investigates numerous instances that do not fit into the normal lexicon of diagnoses, arguing that by dismissing unexplained phenomena, we could be missing valuable opportunities to advance science.

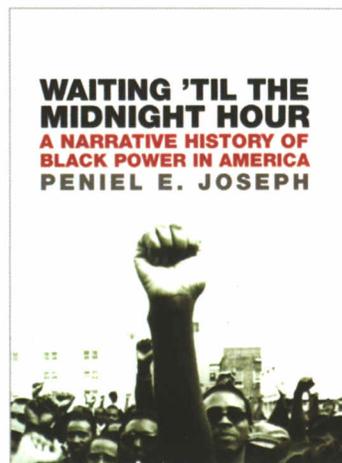


## Times of Triumph, Times of Doubt: Science and the Battle for Public Trust

by Elof Axel Carlson, Professor  
Emeritus, Department of  
Biochemistry and Cell Biology

2006, Cold Spring Harbor  
Laboratory Press

Eminent geneticist and historian of science Elof Carlson explores the moral foundations of science. He analyzes the current hot-button topics of cloning, assisted reproduction, prenatal diagnosis, genetically modified food, and also historical case studies, such as thalidomide's effects on unborn children and human experimentation at Tuskegee. Carlson dissects the motivation and ethics of the scientists and their critics, asking why, despite good intentions, scientists sometimes lose the public's trust.

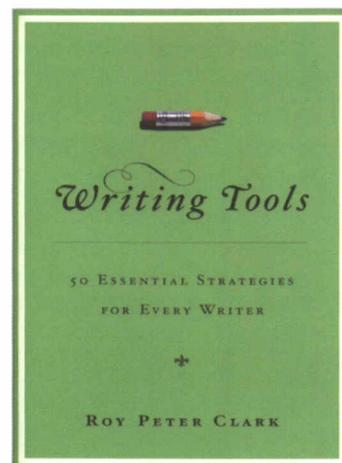


## Waiting 'Til the Midnight Hour: A Narrative History of Black Power in America

by Peniel E. Joseph, Assistant  
Professor, Department of  
Africana Studies

2006, Henry Holt and Company

Drawing on original archival research and extensive oral histories, including dozens of new interviews, Peniel Joseph vividly reveals the way in which Black Power redefined black identity and culture and in the process redrew the landscape of American race relations. The cast of historical characters includes William Worthly, Albert Cleage, James Baldwin, and Malcolm X. With a novelist's eye for detail, Joseph uncovers buried intimacies of the larger postwar freedom struggle. *Washington Post Book World* recently honored *Waiting 'Til the Midnight Hour* as one of the "Best Books of 2006," calling it "an engaging revisionist narrative that reveals a hidden world of black intellectual ferment."



## Writing Tools: 50 Essential Strategies for Every Writer

by Roy Peter Clark, M.A. 1971,  
Ph.D. 1974

2006, Little, Brown and Company

Roy Peter Clark, vice president and senior scholar at the Poynter Institute, one of the most prestigious schools for journalism in the world, transforms decades of experience into tools for writers of all kinds—students, aspiring novelists, journalists, and writers of memos and e-mails. From the most basic tool ("Watch Those Adverbs") to the more complex tool ("Write from Different Cinematic Angles"), and using more than 200 examples from literature and journalism, *Writing Tools* offers nuts and bolts, special effects, blueprints, and useful habits.

## New & Noteworthy

- Gifts of a Pauper** (poetry)  
by Gary J. Aaronberg, Parking Services
- Yank on the Hill** (novel)  
by Levent Gulari, Class of 1981
- What Remains Behind** (novel)  
Teny Jacobs, Class of 1970

- Stella's Secret: A True Story of Holocaust Survival**  
by Jerry L. Jennings, Class of 1977
- Looking for the Uncertain Past** (poetry)  
by Daniel Thomas Moran,  
Class of 1979

- The Light of City and Sea: An Anthology of Suffolk County Poetry**  
edited by Daniel Thomas Moran,  
Class of 1979; Associate Editor,  
Graham Everett, Ph.D. 1994
- Catamarans: Every Sailor's Guide**  
by Gregor Tarjan, Class of 1984

- Pious Devotion, Pious Diversion: The Pulpits** by Nicola and Giovanni Pisano (art history)  
by Anita Moskowitz, Professor,  
Department of Art
- Call My Name the Wind** (novel)  
by Dave Oser, Class of 1981

## Seeking the Write Stuff

*The Brook* welcomes submissions of books recently written by alumni, faculty, and staff. Send a review copy and relevant press materials to: Sherrill Jones, Editor, "Brookmarks," Office of Communications, Room 144 Administration, Stony Brook University, Stony Brook, NY 11794-0605. E-mail: [Sherrill.Jones@stonybrook.edu](mailto:Sherrill.Jones@stonybrook.edu)

Please note: To purchase a copy of any of these featured titles, contact the University Bookstore at (631) 632-9747. Visit [www.stonybrook.edu/bookstore](http://www.stonybrook.edu/bookstore) for a calendar of events, including a series of faculty author readings sponsored by the Friends of the Library and the University Bookstore.

# Flashback

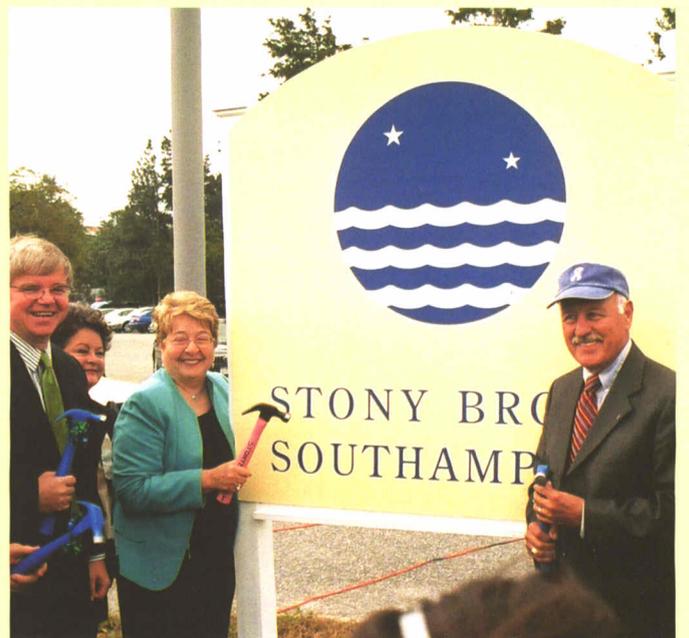


Turning over the first spades of dirt are, from left to right, SUNY Board of Trustees chairman Frank C. Moore, Governor Nelson Rockefeller, and Ward Melville.

## Breaking Ground, Groundbreaking

**O**n a chilly early April morning in 1960, New York State Governor Nelson Rockefeller, SUNY Board of Trustees chairman Frank C. Moore, and philanthropist Ward Melville, turned over the first spades of dirt at the formal groundbreaking of what would become the permanent home of Stony Brook University. The new university was the result of the Heald Report, which recommended that a major new university center be established on Long Island to “stand with the finest in the country.” In just 50 years, Stony Brook has more than fulfilled the hopes and dreams of all those who stood on that small patch of ground just south of the Stony Brook railroad station.

Last October, Assemblyman Fred Thiele, Stony Brook Council Member Diana Weir, President Shirley Strum Kenny, and New York State Senator Ken LaValle, celebrated the opening of Stony Brook Southampton. This groundbreaking new college overlooking the Atlantic Ocean will offer one of the nation’s most innovative curricula organized around issues related to environmental sustainability, public policy, and natural resource management. Applications are being accepted for Fall 2007. Visit [www.stonybrook.edu/southampton](http://www.stonybrook.edu/southampton). ■



# Stars of Stony Brook Gala Honors Richard Leakey

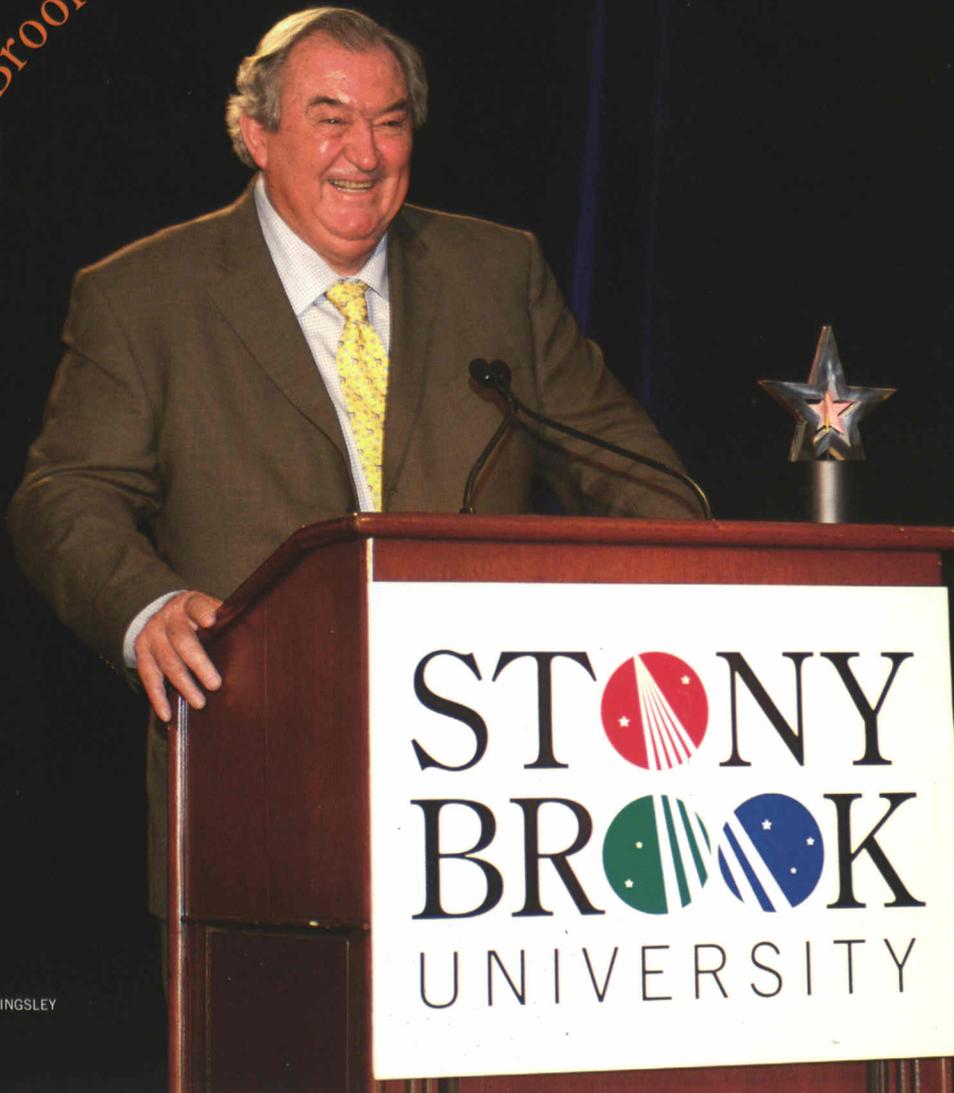
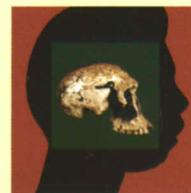


PHOTO BY ANN BILLINGSLEY



## TURKANA BASIN INSTITUTE

World-renowned conservationist and paleo-anthropologist Richard Leakey was the honoree at the eighth annual Stars of Stony Brook Gala on April 11. The event, held at Pier 60 at Chelsea Piers in Manhattan, raised \$2 million.

Proceeds from the Gala will go to scholarships, as well as to the Turkana Basin Institute, a state-of-the-art research center in East Africa created by Dr. Leakey in partnership with Stony Brook, as well as with the U.S. International University in Kenya and the University of Nairobi. Northern Kenya and southern Ethiopia comprise a fossil-rich region where many of the world's most important paleontological and archeological discoveries have been made.

Dr. Leakey has served on the faculty in the Department of Anthropology at Stony Brook since 2002. He has established an annual Human Evolution Symposium, bringing together international scientists from many disciplines to try to obtain a clearer understanding of the major forces and events that shaped the root of the human lineage. This year's symposium will be held on September 25 (see Events Calendar, page 19). He has also created the Stony Brook World Environmental Forum to focus scientific attention on the urgent problems impacting the global environment.



STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

Office of Communications  
Room 144 Administration  
Stony Brook University  
Stony Brook, NY 11794-0605

### The Brook, Vol. 7, No. 2

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*The Brook* is a publication of the Office of Communications, 144 Administration, Stony Brook University, Stony Brook, NY 11794-0605. © 2006

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Serials and Acquisitions - Ma  
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2/27/07

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