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clean up Baltimore's waterways

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NOT SO RUN OF THE MILL

Clearwater Mills' trash interceptor removes 20 tons of trash per month from the mouth of the Jones Falls, keeping the trash from entering the Baltimore Harbor. The company was founded by John Kellett '85.

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ON THE COVER:

THE MIRE Baltimore's gritty reputation extends to its waterways, where this photograph was taken. Photograph by Adam Lindquist/Waterfront Partnership of Baltimore

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FACULTY AT OUR FOUNDATION

THE ARRIVAL OF NEW STUDENTS at the beginning of the academic year is an exciting time. But beyond the hubbub of move-in and orientation, it's important to remember why these young people are coming to Oberlin. They are here to get a great liberal arts and/or conservatory education by studying with our outstanding faculty.

The extraordinary educational opportunities that we provide for Oberlin students reflect a shared enterprise involving our gifted faculty and staff. To kick off this academic year, 150 faculty and staff gathered for a colloquium titled "The Impact of This Oberlin Education." We discussed ways to bring the world into the classroom and the classroom into the world. It was an inspirational day for many of us as we broadly considered the power and promise of a liberal education.

Oberlin continues to attract first-rate teacher scholars. This is a wonderful environment for a faculty member committed to providing in-depth examination of disciplinary topics, as well as broader transdisciplinary explorations. Our faculty is challenged regularly to refine and rework content and pedagogy in order to cultivate, nurture, and facilitate a learning environment that is inspiring and demanding.

Faculty members come to Oberlin having trained at the finest universities in the world. Our students benefit in many ways from the extraordinary scholarly profile of our faculty. Their singular impact on their particular areas of work builds on the longstanding reputational strengths of the college. Many faculty members involve our students in their scholarly work and/or incorporate their expertise directly into the courses they teach. In this way, teaching and scholarship remain inextricably linked.

Our professors are more than great teachers and mentors. They are also recognized for their scholarship and leadership in their chosen fields by their peers. Every year, faculty from the college and the conservatory pursue research, publish articles, books, and papers, and give

lectures and serve as panelists at national and international conferences.

Over the summer, for example, three of our distinguished faculty members were honored for their work in their fields. Susan Colley, Andrew and Pauline Delaney Professor of Mathematics at Oberlin, was appointed by the Mathematical Association of America to a five-year term as editor of the prestigious *American Mathematical Monthly*. Susan will be the first woman to serve in this role. The journal's readership spans the world and a wide range of ages, interests, and mathematical abilities.

Professor of History Carol Lasser was named president-elect of the Society for Historians of the Early American Republic (SHEAR), an association of approximately 1,000 scholars dedicated to exploring United States history between 1776 and 1861. SHEAR's mission is to encourage the study of the early republican period among historians, students, and the general public, as well as cultivate productive exchanges between scholars at every level of experience. She will be inaugurated as president at its next annual meeting in July 2016.

Professor of Jazz Saxophone Gary Bartz will be awarded the BNY Mellon Jazz 2015 Living Legacy Award in a ceremony at the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts on October 16. The award honors living jazz masters who have achieved distinction in jazz performance and education.

Congratulations to Professors Colley, Lasser, and Bartz on their respective honors. Their work exemplifies the engagement of our faculty with their students and peers here in Oberlin and with the wider world. It speaks to their strength and commitment as teachers and scholars, and, in keeping with Oberlin tradition, as active, engaged citizens. Even as our faculty is undergoing a generational change, it remains the foundation of Oberlin's greatness.

MARVIN KRISLOV
President, *Oberlin College*



TAPPAN UNDUN

A recent letter (spring 2015) said Lewis Tappan started the “database” that became Dun & Bradstreet, the parent of surveillance: “profiling, rendition, black site, ‘GITMO,’ drone, etc.” Let’s look at some history. Arthur and Lewis provided financial backing for the establishment of Oberlin College. Both were ardent abolitionists. Tappan Square is named in honor of both of them. One of the causes of the financial crisis of 1837 was extension of credit to businesses that were later unable to pay their debts. The underlying problem was that merchants did not have adequate financial information about businesses seeking credit to determine whether they would repay. In 1841, Lewis Tappan started Mercantile Agency, a financial reporting firm, to fill this need. Merchants hired the agency to determine whether a potential customer was creditworthy. Three years later the agency only had 280 customers. Five years after that, in 1849, Lewis had become wealthy from other sources, primarily silk trading, and left the agency to concentrate on anti-slavery activities. Lewis Tappan began a startup business in 1841. He left it eight years later. When he left, the company’s data consisted of files of paper records, mostly handwritten. And the company’s business was determining how likely a borrower was to repay its debts. It’s a big stretch to go from these facts to saying that Lewis contributed to modern-day surveillance: “profiling, rendition, black site, ‘GITMO,’ drone, etc.” 166 years after he left his business.

FLOYD SMITH ’53
New York City

ALL APOLOGIES

More than 30 years have passed since my Oberlin adventure, but rarely does a week go by that I don’t think fondly of my experience

there—the superlative liberal arts education, the friendships, the music, the exploration of self and relation to others, and the many challenges: academic, political, and personal. I particularly value my exposure to progressive politics, alternative lifestyles of all shapes and sizes, and the co-op movement.

But sometimes a dark cloud stains my happy memories, and I recall times when my behavior did not rise to the level that Oberlin expected from me. I realize that these youthful errors of judgment, while perhaps unavoidable, may have caused inconvenience or pain to some, and now, after all applicable statutes of limitations have run, I feel the need to apologize.

I apologize for the disruption caused when my roommate and I painted a blue, 6-foot diameter peace sign on the wall of our dorm room in Burton. It was an inspiration to us, but our RA and the dean of students didn’t see it that way.

I apologize for removing the “MEN” sign from a men’s room and affixing it to our dorm room door. All I can say is that it seemed like a good idea at the time.

I apologize to anyone who may have been listening to WOBC at about 4 a.m. on a Sunday morning in January 1980 for playing the live version of “Sweet Jane” from a Lou Reed solo album. I was as surprised as you by Mr. Reed’s nearly continuous stream of (surprisingly creative) profanity on that particular track. I am assuming the FCC wasn’t listening, or I would have heard something by now.

I apologize to my professors and classmates for missing class because I was (a) asleep; (b) in the middle of a really intense conversation at the snack bar; or (c) skinny dipping at the rez.

I apologize to the world-class Allen Memorial Art Museum and the artist who made a sculpture consisting of lines of acorns arranged on the floor of an exhibit room for what might be described as my not-well-thought-out performance piece. After several visits, I had become obsessed by the need to find out if the acorns were loose or attached. On the day in question, I knelt down and placed my index finger, ever so gently, on one of the acorns, which caused it to roll quite some distance away. *Quercus Erat Demonstrandum*. I did my best to replace the acorn in its original position.

I apologize for depriving the college and visiting performers of income when I used alternative entrances and inside contacts to

attend concerts at Finney Chapel without paying. No, I have not included a check.

I apologize to the proud yet tolerant members of Oberlin Ultimate for my consistent failure to successfully execute the layout move we referred to as “a gator.”

I apologize to those individuals (you know who you are) who suffered through my thoughtless infidelities. I blame them on (a) my hormones; (b) my immaturity; (c) the grain alcohol punch; and (d) the general decline in our society’s moral constructs.

I apologize to the winner of a “Best Costume” contest for which the first prize was a pineapple. This is probably cold comfort, but I can assure you it was delicious.

I apologize to the staff and crew of a local television station for making them think that my roommate and I were living in a teepee next to Johnson House. In fact, it was two other students who were living in the teepee, but they were tired of the press coverage and so we agreed to take their places for that latest interview. We thoroughly enjoyed meeting everyone and watching the segment on that night’s news, and hope that none of those involved lost their jobs when they discovered the truth.

For me, as for many, my college years were not only a time to acquire academic knowledge and skills, but also to learn about myself, make connections with my peers, and engage in a little healthy experimentation. In some cases, this learning and experimentation involved a certain amount of transgression and of breaking the rules (and, sometimes, facing the consequences). If I had engaged in fewer transgressions during those years and spent more time studying, I probably would have learned a lot more. But with more than 30 years of perspective, I now realize that if I hadn’t taken those risks, I also would have learned a lot less.

JOHN M. BECKER ’83
Waltham, Mass.

CREDIT PROBLEMS

The recently published *Oberlin Conservatory Magazine* rightfully celebrates the 150-year history of the conservatory, including a section which traces its roots and formative moments. We’re delighted that the conservatory regards the 1953 Dave Brubeck (continued on next page)

Wait. What?

**Oberlin's
2016 Commencement/
Reunion Weekend
won't be on Memorial
Day Weekend!?!?**

**That is correct!
So mark your calendars
for May 20-23, 2016.**

Due to a change in Oberlin's academic calendar, commencement now falls on the fourth Monday of each May—not always Memorial Day. CRW 2016 promises to be an amazing celebration of class/cluster reunions, the conservatory's 150th reunion, and commencement. Join us!

Volunteer for your 2016 reunion!

Join other classmates in shaping the activities of your next reunion.

10th: CLASSES OF 2005, 2006, 2007	45th: CLASSES OF 1970, 1971, 1972
25th: CLASS OF 1991	50th: CLASS OF 1966
30th: CLASSES OF 1985, 1986, 1987	60th: CLASSES OF 1955, 1956, 1957

Celebrating 150 Years of Music at Oberlin: 1865-2015

All conservatory alumni, double-degree graduates, musical studies majors, students who enrolled in music courses, and all Oberlin alumni who love music are invited to attend and get involved.

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(continued from previous page)

Quartet concert in Finney Chapel as of singular historic importance. In 1953 they weren't so eager to celebrate that event and wouldn't even provide a decent grand piano for Dave to play. They wanted to keep our efforts at a comfortable distance by ignoring them. Jim Newman, a founding member of the Oberlin Jazz Club, was called into the Con dean's office to justify using the name Oberlin College in connection with the liner notes he had written for the *Jazz at Oberlin* album. We're delighted that the Oberlin Conservatory has finally come around and embraced jazz as a vital part of its curriculum. The Brubeck concert in 1953 was not a part of the conservatory's history. Certainly it was a milestone in the history of jazz concert presentation on college campuses, but the conservatory deserves no credit for it.

JERRY ABELES '56, MARGARET COON BEATTY '54 (*widow of Allen Beatty who recorded the concert for WOBC*), PETER CIURCZAK '55, MARTHA CROW '55, JUD DAVIS '55, NED DE COPPET '54, JOHN GATES '56, THOMAS GAYTERS '50, JIM KINCAID '55, CHLOE ANDERSON NASSAU '55, JERRY NELSON '56, JIM NEWMAN '55, ANNE DINSMORE PHILLIPS '56, GEORGE REID '53, JANE WEISSMAN REMER '54, NICK ROBFOGEL '56, MICHAEL S. BANK '54

The *Oberlin Conservatory Magazine* responds: *While the Brubeck concert wasn't a conservatory program, we agree with the writers that it was a significant event in the musical history of Oberlin. For the role it had in helping to shape what the conservatory is today, we felt it earned a spot in the timeline as one of the school's "formative moments."*

HONORARY NOT DESERVED

Oberlin should consider rescinding the honorary doctorate that it awarded to Bill Cosby, as other colleges have done. Considering the unique place that women have had in the college's history, that would be an appropriate statement to make. The sooner, the better.

BENJAMIN SEVITCH '60
Newington, Conn.

COMMENCEMENT CONTRASTS

Reading Michelle Obama's commencement address, I couldn't help but contrast her platitudes and distortions with the forthright presentation of Pete Seeger at my graduation. Seeger spoke a sentence and stated, modestly and incorrectly, that he was not much of a speaker and took out his banjo to play moving and meaningful songs for the rest of his speech. He then walked to the end of a very long student box lunch line and waited in the hot sun with the rest of us. Rather than carrying with them an abundance of useless facts or opinions they will probably find irrelevant or outdated as they go through life, 2015 graduates hopefully acquired thinking skills that allowed them to assess Obama's speech with critical and analytic skills.

STEPHEN GOLDER '70
Falmouth, Mass.

TOP BUNK BUMMER



Elizabeth Auld writes (spring 2015), "When did the college figure out that the men were as capable as the women to operate a washing machine?" That made me remember a photo of me learning how to wash my own clothes in September of 1958. I got to Oberlin after my two roommates were already there. I had the top bunk. The maids did not change the sheets on the top bunk. They just put them there and I had to make my own bed—bummer.

STEVE VANEK '62
Ninilchik, Ark.

Oberlin Alumni Magazine welcomes comments from readers. Please address your letters to *Oberlin Alumni Magazine*, 247 W. Lorain St., Suite C, Oberlin, OH 44074-1089; or e-mail: alum.mag@oberlin.edu. Letters may be edited for clarity and space. Additional letters may appear on OAM's website at www.oberlin.edu/oam.

Around Tappan Square



(NEURO)SCIENCE! From left to right: Assistant Professor Gunnar Kwakye with STRONG scholars Oluwadamilare Ogunjimi and Pang Fei Chiang.

STRONG Bonds

BY ROSALIND BLACK '14

SUMMER 2015 SAW THE FIRST SESSION OF THE Science and Technology Research Opportunities for a New Generation (STRONG) Program, which gives incoming first-year students of color, Pell-eligible students, women, and first-generation college students the chance to gain early exposure to the campus and community and thus a head start on settling in to the demands of college life. Eleven students participated this inaugural year.

Inspired by a similar program at Hamilton College and created by **Afia Ofori-Mensa**, Oberlin's director of undergraduate research, and **Tim Elgren**, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, the summer program paired incoming students with professors in their fields who served as research mentors. During the month of July, each scholar worked full time in a research group with current Oberlin students, conducting projects under the guidance of the faculty mentor.

Throughout the school year, scholars live in the same residence hall and have the chance to work in their same research groups during winter term.

The STRONG program, funded by the Office of the President and gifts from alumni, covers the scholars' summertime travel, housing, and dining costs and pays them a stipend for their summer research. Scholars also receive funds to offset the purchase of textbooks their first year. While the financial support is helpful to many of the scholars, Ofori-Mensa says becoming familiar with Oberlin, their professors, and fellow students is just as important to their success.

"It gives them time to form connections early on in their career here that will support them throughout their years at Oberlin."



Complicated Relationships: Mary Church Terrell's Legacy for 21st Century Activists

February 26-27, 2016

Oberlin's Gender, Sexuality, and Feminist Studies Institute, the Oberlin College Archives, and the Africana Studies department are sponsoring a symposium on the life and legacy of Mary Church Terrell, Class of 1884, a feminist, civil rights activist, and founder of the National Association of Colored Women and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. The symposium was prompted by the donation of the Mary Church Terrell Papers to the archives by Ray and Jean Langston, who will be among the many scholars, activists, and others appearing at the symposium. **For more information, visit oberlin.edu/oam.**

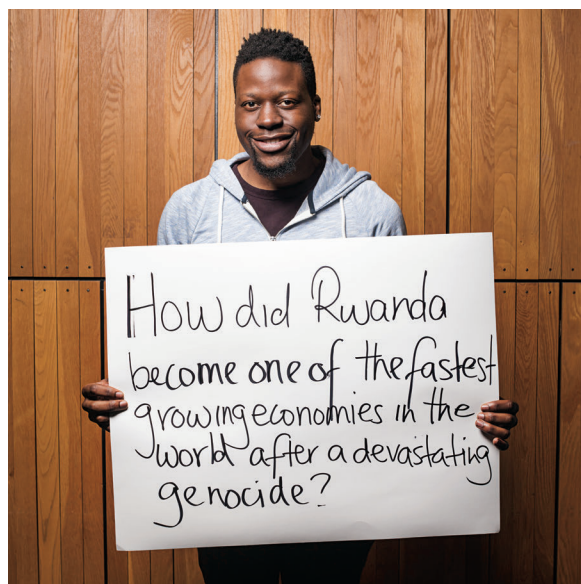
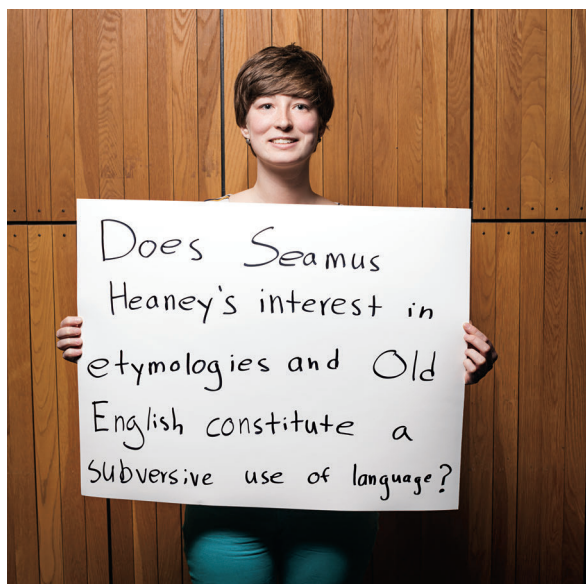
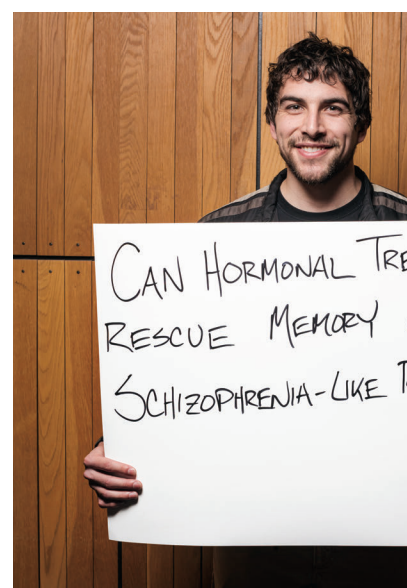
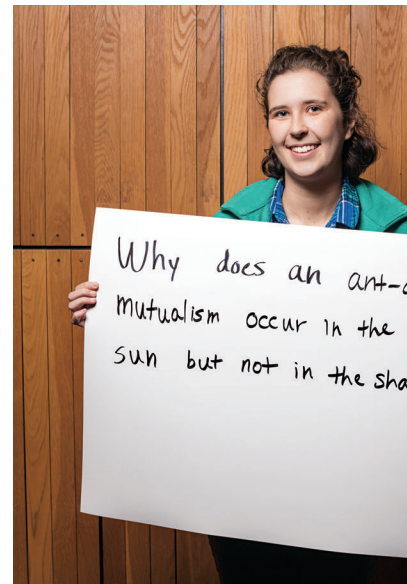
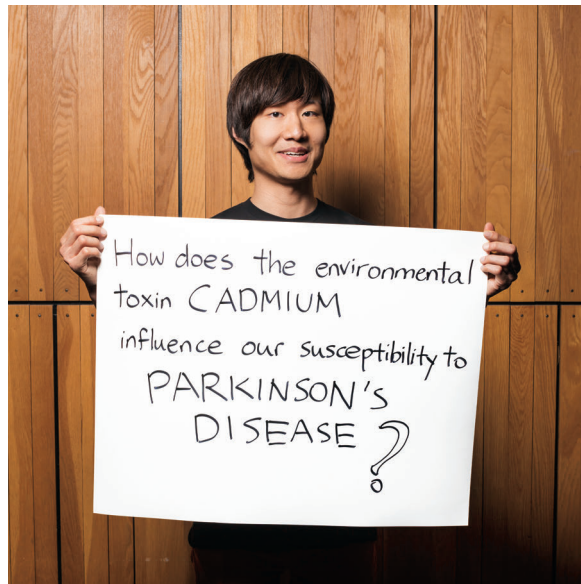
Senior Moments

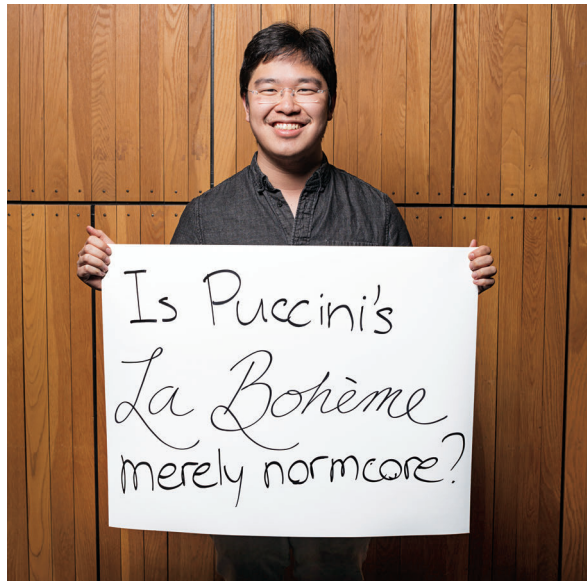
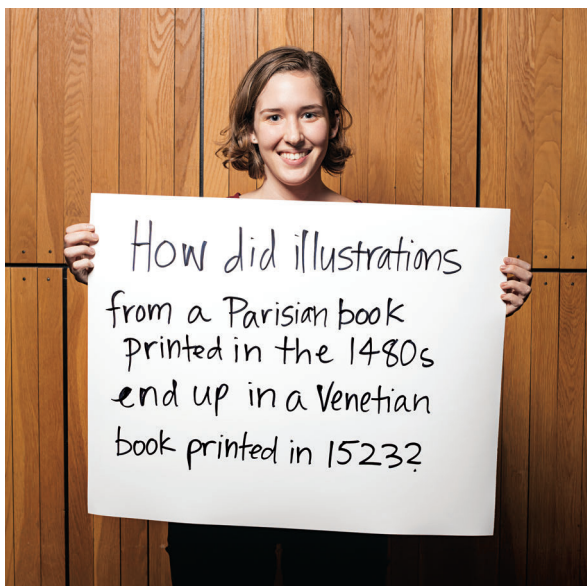
For the last half-dozen years, Oberlin's offices of the Dean of Arts and Sciences and the Dean of Studies have sponsored the senior symposium, a campuswide celebration of the scholarly and artistic achievements of the upcoming class of new graduates.

The spring 2015 symposium featured the largest group to date—70 seniors and fifth-year students serving on 21 panels, each categorized by discipline. Each student gave a 12-minute presentation on their independent and collaborative work to the Oberlin community.

To get a sense of the rich variety of topics, the Source, Oberlin's on-campus news site, published some of the research abstracts along with photos of the scholars with their thesis questions. Here, the *Oberlin Alumni Magazine* shares a selection of them.

For more photos and information on the subjects studied, visit oncampus.oberlin.edu/source.





TANYA ROSEN-JONES '97

SITES Set High

ROSALIND BLACK '14

When linguist **Kim Faber's** son entered kindergarten in 2003, she was dismayed to learn that the Oberlin City Schools did not offer language programs before high school. A Spanish language instructor at the college since 1999, Faber had hoped her kids—who spoke English and Dutch—would learn Spanish in school. She had come from California, where public school world language programs began in middle school. Though private schools in the Oberlin area offered more options, she and her husband, Professor of Hispanic Studies Sebastiaan Faber, preferred to keep their children in public schools.

So Faber founded **Spanish in the Elementary Schools (SITES)**. It began as a pilot program in which college students taking her Linguistics for Language Students course would visit the Oberlin schools to teach Spanish, the language a community survey revealed to be the most popular. The program had the blessing of the public school's administration and received start-up funding from the college's Bonner Center for Service and Learning.

In 2005, Faber began training 16 college students to teach one class per week for 10 weeks each semester in four kindergarten and four third-grade classrooms at Eastwood and Prospect elementary schools. The next year, Faber expanded the program to include all kindergarten through fifth-grade classrooms—and more than tripled the required number of college student instructors from 16 to 54. Faber was worried at first that the college students wouldn't volunteer, but 65 signed up. Fears assuaged, she was able to place teachers in not only elementary school classrooms, but preschool classrooms as well.

Elementary school students now receive 30 minutes of Spanish instruction twice a week during the school year. SITES teachers specialize their lesson plans and teaching methods for each grade level so students are more engaged with what they're learning. This means, Faber says with a laugh, "we talk a lot about teeth and blood in the younger grades because their teeth are always falling out, and they always have a Band-Aid on. Instantly they say, 'I'm with you. You're talking about me and my teeth.'"

The SITES program not only benefits elementary school students and college students aspiring to be teachers, but it has also affected the school system, helping Oberlin City Schools to become the first K-12 International Baccalaureate (IB) district in Ohio and paving the way for a structural integration of language teaching across all grades. Starting this school year, students in first through fifth grade will be taught by a certified teacher with IB training. SITES instructors, meanwhile, will continue to teach Spanish in kindergarten, first, and second grade, as they work closely with the Oberlin schools to support language learning at all grade levels.

To mark SITES' 10-year anniversary, Faber organized "Language, Power, and Education," a series of talks and discussions that took place over several weeks in the spring of 2015. The event also highlighted the inauguration of a new educational studies concentration.

"It's been a powerful 10 years. I'm excited to see what happens next," Faber says. "I've learned a ton and the students have, too. It's a safe playground. Obies love being creative and sometimes we, as educators, need to get out of their way and let them learn by doing. SITES is a really great place for that."

English Spin on Ball Chair Tale

BY JEFF HAGAN '86

Ray English, who retired in the spring following a 36-year career with the college—including 25 years as head of libraries—oversaw Oberlin's library system through a period of enormous change. As technology presented new challenges and opportunities, he kept the library on the leading edge of service to its users. During his tenure, the library joined the consortium of Ohio's academic libraries (OhioLINK); he also created an institutional repository for Oberlin's scholarly and creative output, expanded digital collections and scholarship services, opened a new science library, and renovated spaces.

English was a national leader among his peers, cofounding the Association of College and Research Libraries—which twice named him Academic Research Librarian of the Year—and serving as chair of the steering committee of the Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition.

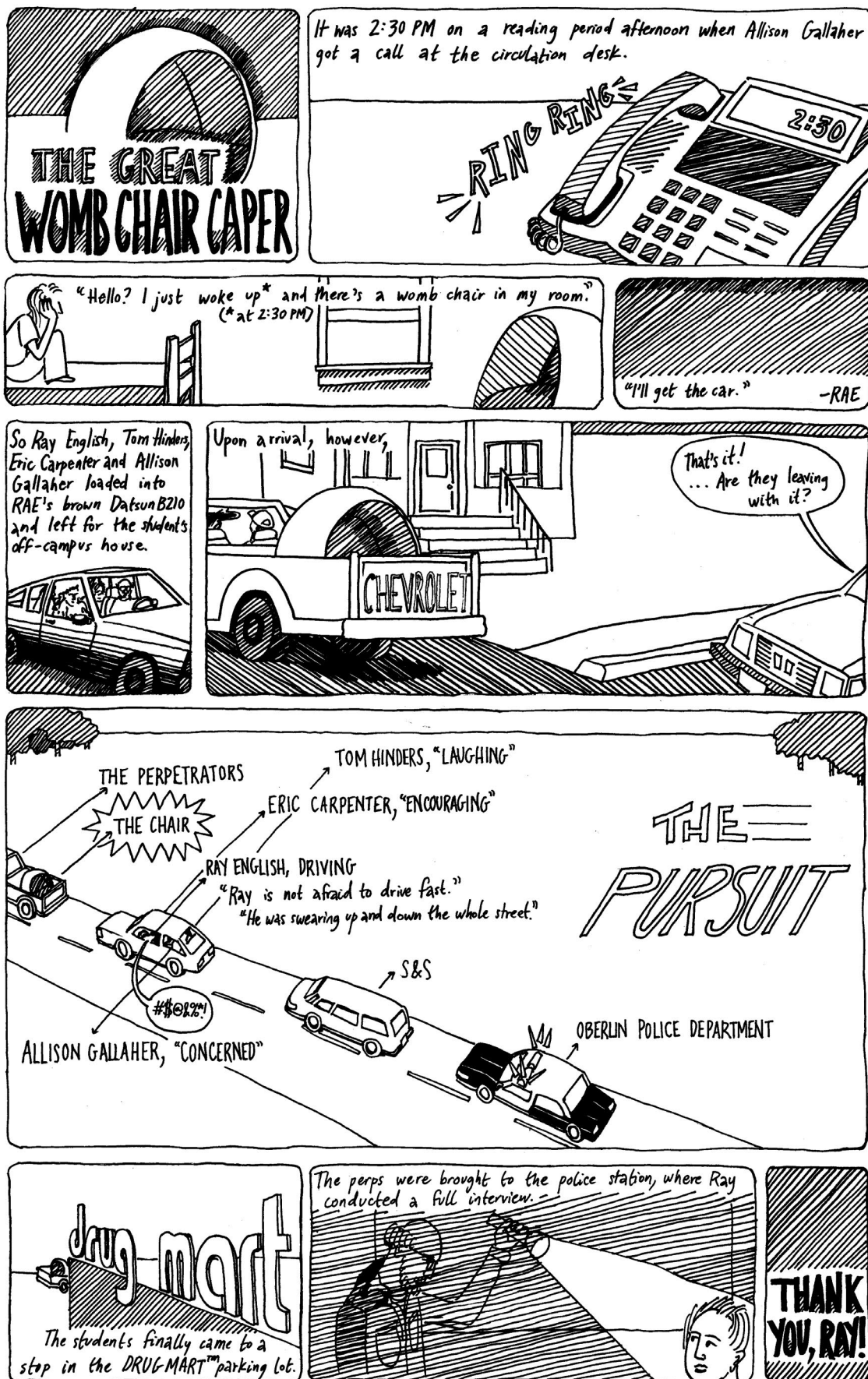
English is also famously protective of the library's contents—and not just its impressive collection.

When one of Oberlin's iconic Eero Aarnio-designed ball chairs was taken from the library and placed in a student's off-campus room as a prank, English rushed to the house—only to see the chair fleeing the residence in the back of a vehicle heading north out of town.

On the occasion of his retirement last spring, English's colleagues at the library asked artist and student staffer **Margaret "Maisy" Byerly '15** to memorialize the incident in graphic form.

Ever a stickler for details, English points out they caught up with the chair a bit further up Route 58 than Drug Mart, and it was a van, not a pick-up, that carried it.

To read a Q&A with English, see the spring 2015 issue of *Library Perspectives*, the newsletter of the Friends of the Oberlin College Library, by searching new.oberlin.edu. To see more of Byerly's artwork, visit maisysdraws.wordpress.com.



2015 © mbyerly

Scholars' Society Taps Lasser for Presidency

BY KASEY CHEYDLEUR '15

Professor of History **Carol Lasser** has been named president-elect of the Society for Historians of the Early American Republic (SHEAR). Established in 1977, SHEAR is an association of approximately 1,000 scholars dedicated to exploring events in United States history between 1776 and 1861. Its mission is to encourage the study of the early republican period among historians, students, and the general public, as well as to cultivate productive exchanges between scholars at every level of experience.

Lasser has attended SHEAR conferences since 1983, serving on the conference planning committee, the advisory council, and the editorial board of SHEAR's quarterly publication, *Journal of the Early Republic*. She will be inaugurated as president in July 2016.

Lasser is passionate about studying the early American republic because of the time period's sense of possibility. "There were all of these people who were full of optimism, who were thinking creatively about

how to move forward in the world, and some of them succeeded. There's no question there was imperialism, there was racism, there was human enslavement, and there was a lack of human rights—all of those things are true—but there were these people who were beginning to think differently about how you can organize a society for a greater social justice."

She also looks forward to sharing her excitement about the time period in her new role at SHEAR. "I am excited to be working with an organization that is so committed to making sure the history of the republic is a vibrant part of the conversation—not as a monument to the past, but as something that can really help us understand the kinds of issues the people of the early republic were dealing with, and how those issues inform us today and can help us think more broadly."

As president, Lasser says she wants to make sure SHEAR continues to attract scholars of differing levels of experience. "Maintaining the participation of younger scholars is one of the things that we find really important, so we need to continue to find strategies that keep us a vibrant, diverse, and innovative organization."



Hope Hibbard (left) and Margaret Schaufler, Oberlin women whose oral histories have been collected.



TALKING HISTORY

The Oberlin Heritage Center's **Oberlin Oral History Project** has amassed a collection of more than 100 interviews that create a deeply personal portrait of the town of Oberlin in the 20th century. The collection

was started in 1979 by **Peter Way '63**, who interviewed African Americans with ties to Civil War families. A new round of interviews begun at the turn of the 21st century continues to build the collection. The project yielded a theatrical presentation in 2003 and a book in 2014—*Bonnets to Boardrooms: Women's Stories from a Historic College Town*, compiled by **Eugenia Poporad Vanek** and featuring recollections from 52 Oberlin women, including many alumnae. The book contains 163 photographs selected by **Prue Richards '70** and Oberlin College archivist **Ken Grossi** and the archives staff. It was designed by **Sarah MacLennan Kerr '61**. For more information, visit www.oberlinheritagecenter.org.

Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Takes Root

BY KASEY CHEYDLEUR '15

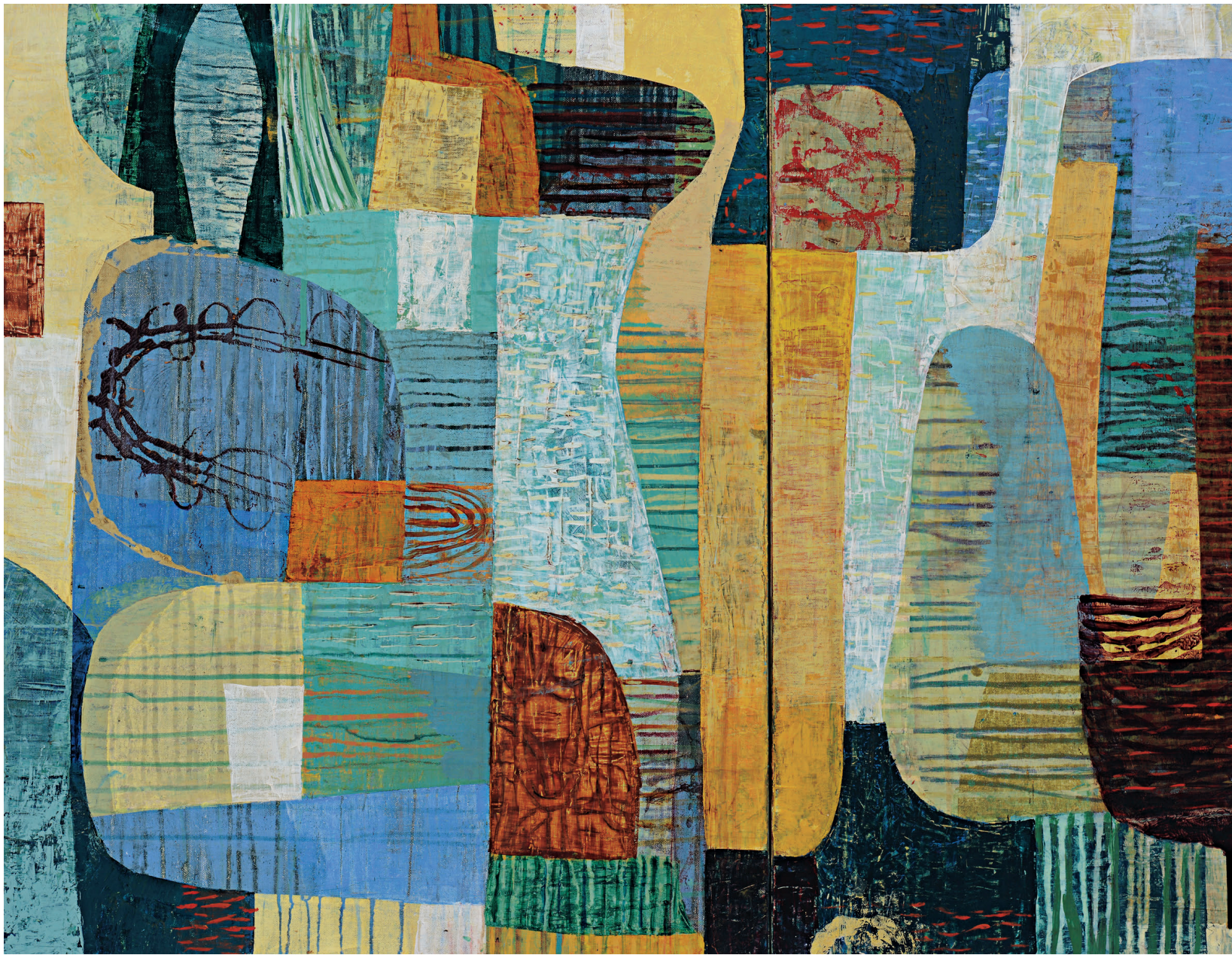
A new initiative of the **Oberlin Project** that aims to foster new businesses in Lorain County focusing on environmental and economic sustainability launched this fall with a pop-up marketplace in downtown Oberlin. Called **SEED Ventures**, the marketplace reflects the diversity and creativity that characterize the Oberlin community, says Scott Hulver '16, a senior who is working with the program as lead SEED grower.

During SEED's inaugural program, which began in September and runs through January 2016, entrepreneurs will participate in workshops designed to help them identify business goals and maintain their business once the program ends, and to sell their products in a prime downtown location. The temporary pop-up marketplace gives the selected entrepreneurs a chance to test the market for their product and engage with customers in person. SEED is particularly interested in businesses targeting the four key Oberlin markets: agriculture and local food, arts and tourism, energy efficiency, and resource recovery.

"Oberlin has a bountiful opportunity for innovation," says Hulver. "It's home to talented, creative, and driven people motivated by Oberlin's arts and social service resources, as well as commitment to the triple bottom line—profit, social well-being, and environmental sustainability. SEED is all about connecting these resources to foster Oberlin as a center of innovation and entrepreneurship in the area."

Hulver says part of SEED's mission is to connect rural entrepreneurs to a larger network of businesses, entrepreneurs, and start-ups, so they can share skills and resources and brainstorm together, much like the start-up culture of Silicon Valley. To learn more visit <http://www.seedventuresoberlin.org>.

Thought Process



SUN SETS IN THE WEST Berkeley, California, artist, illustrator, and educator claire b. cotts '86 creates paintings that seem lit by the light of a setting sun—even her richly colored abstracts appear drenched in dusk. Her figurative paintings show the influence of the sometimes unsettling work of Balthus (one of her inspirations), while the curvy, organic shapes that make up her abstracts, like the one above, evoke the gentle geometry of nature—still mysterious, but perhaps less menacing. Cotts offers painting workshops to experienced and novice painters alike.

Metropolis Missing

The Ghost Network (Melville House Books), the well-reviewed novel by **Catie Disabato '08**, is full of disappearances, including the high-profile vanishing of mega-famous pop star Molly Metropolis and the quieter

departure of Caitlin Taer, a young woman who just so happened to be trying to figure out what became of Molly. Most of the words of this meta-friendly novel—written as a true crime nonfiction book—are attributed to Caitlin's fictional Oberlin professor, Cyrus K. Archer; the rest are written by someone named Catie Disabato. An excerpt:

On July 14, 2010, in response to a petition from her immediate family, the state declared Caitlin Taer legally dead and the Chicago Tribune published a short obituary: "Taer disappeared after a boating accident on Lake Michigan in late April. Maritime police were unable to recover a body but investigators concluded that she died in the incident." A coffin

filled with keepsakes, sandbags, and her favorite records was buried in place of a body.

Compared to Chicago's other disappearance that year, Taer's was small potatoes. Taer was actually a footnote in the larger disappearance of Miranda Young, better known by her stage name, Molly Metropolis. Four months before Taer's disastrous boat

ONE QUESTION FOR WILLIAM ALEXANDER '00

The Author's Voice

WILLIAM ALEXANDER'S FOURTH novel, *Nomad* (Simon & Schuster), a science fiction immigration story for young readers and a sequel to his 2014 novel, *Ambassador*, is out this fall. *Goblin Secrets*, his 2012 debut novel, won the National Book Award for Young People's Literature. It also picked up an *AudioFile* magazine Earphone Award for the audio version, which is voiced by Alexander '00. That got us curious.

Oberlin Alumni Magazine: *What was it like to record the audio version of your book, and did you feel the urge to change or "correct" it as you were narrating?*

William Alexander: The whole process had its own wild momentum in the wake of the National Book Awards—we had no plans to produce an audiobook until then. Once we made plans, I had to audition for the role, since writing a book and reading it aloud aren't necessarily overlapping skill sets. Recording in the studio was also a bit of a blur, during which the text itself was the only steady, solid thing I had to hold on to. I needed those words to hold still. This squashed any urge I might have felt to fiddle around with the phrasing.

It helped to be a theater major—not just because of the acting classes, but because of the hat-switching involved. You might perform in one show, direct the next one, stage manage the next...and you can't watch the stage while you're standing on it. You can't be the playwright and the performer in the same moment, either—even if you happen to be both.

Steering the Craft by Ursula K. Le Guin is my favorite creative writing textbook, and it starts like this: "The sound of the language is where it all begins and what it all comes back to. The basic elements of language are physical: the noise words make and the rhythm of their relationships."

The sound of language is even more important when you happen to write for kids. Someone, someday, might perform your book as a bedtime story, so it's your responsibility to write something fun to read aloud—or at least something that isn't nails-on-chalkboard painful to read aloud, over and over and over again.

The studio sessions went smoothly. We won the Earphones Award for *Goblin Secrets*. Then I wrote *Ambassador*, my first science fiction novel, aware in advance that it would become an audiobook. This is where I got into trouble.

I put all sorts of vocal shenanigans in *Ambassador*. Several of the characters have specific, real-world accents. One character reshapes its voice to imperfectly mimic the voices of others. And my protagonist's father loves to sing Bollywood tunes in the kitchen. He belts out "Yeh Dosti Hum Nahin" from *Sholay* in his very first scene. I wrote all of this knowing that, one day, I would be trapped with the book in small recording studio. Hubris. But I figured it would all work out if I rehearsed enough. An actor prepares. I sang "Yeh Dosti Humn Nahin" so often than both of my kids had it memorized.

"We don't actually have the rights to that song," the producer told me. I was already in the booth when we

had this conversation.

"Oh," I said. This problem had not occurred to me. It probably should have, but in theater you can sing or play a short selection of music without having to buy rights. Audiobooks have different rules for fair use, apparently.

"Don't worry about it," the producer said. "Just sing the same lyrics to a different tune. That should be fine."

"Oh good," I said.

This is what I get for trying to show off, I thought. I have zero musical training, by the way. It's hard to take your own voice seriously when you share theater classes with opera singers from the Con. But I am painfully familiar with karaoke, and I know what it's like to be an embarrassing parent who won't stop singing in the kitchen. So I belted out some Bollywood lyrics to a slightly different tune.

I wonder how it sounds. I haven't heard it yet.

You would think that my ambushed embarrassment would teach me some sort of lesson. But I wrote just as many vocal shenanigans into *Nomad*, the *Ambassador* sequel. I also added a few characters from the Russian space program. Hopefully I won't sound like a bad Cold War movie when it comes time to record it.



claire b. cotts' diptych *before there was you*. For more images and information, visit clairebcotts.com and clairebcotts.blogspot.com.

trip, Molly Metropolis disappeared in Chicago during her Apocalypse Ball tour. She performed to a sold-out crowd on January 8 and was gone before sound check on January 9. As of this writing, she hasn't yet publicly reemerged. Her disappearance and Taer's are inextricably linked.



PERSPECTIVE

What Next, and For Whom? It's not as simple as "love wins."

BY ERIC ESTES, OBERLIN COLLEGE VICE PRESIDENT AND DEAN OF STUDENTS
AND ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF COMPARATIVE AMERICAN STUDIES



THE U.S. SUPREME COURT DECISION ON MARRIAGE equality represents progress. It also takes place at the same time as events in Charleston and in the shadow of Ferguson and Baltimore. Many of us were troubled by the problematic juxtaposition of celebrations and public mourning and by spoken and unspoken comparisons of oppression and struggle. The tension, however, is an important opportunity for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) activists to confront the ways race and other differences continue to divide the LGBTQ community and shape our experiences of and reactions to this moment. It's not as simple as "love wins." If that were true, the fuller range of identities, experiences, and concerns would be squarely at the forefront of the LGBTQ agenda. We need to create space for honest conversation, not just about who wins and is rewarded in this moment, but also who is still at risk from and fighting for justice against a state and society that continues to police them, often violently. Reflecting on the court's decision and my work with students who are the next generation of activists and organizers, I wish that survival for those who continue to be vulnerable to racism and state violence, especially queer and trans communities of

color, had been prioritized over marriage and military service for all. Now, with marriage equality achieved we can shout: What next and for whom?

I remember noting when Dick and Lynne Cheney came out in support of marriage equality that it was less a sign of progress than a need to reexamine the political project. Marriage equality has sucked up most of the attention and money at the expense of a wider range of arguably more pressing issues. This important moment for the LGBTQ movement, led by and mostly for the benefit of white, gender-conforming men and women of more comfortable financial means, presents an opportunity to acknowledge and address ongoing divisions and inequalities within the LGBTQ community. National focus has turned to employment non-discrimination and that's important, but it must include trans and gender non-conforming people in law and make the leadership of LGBTQ political and advocacy organizations truly diverse and inclusive in practice. Organizations like the Human Rights Campaign have been disappointing. These leadership groups must fix their own employment practices and priorities before they can change society's. A greater focus on economic justice will benefit those largely shut out of the workplace.

To be sure, this alone would help further a desperately needed redirection or at least an expansion of our understanding of and commit-

ment because waiting has come at a cost for too many. Courageous activists who have fought for the dignity of LGBTQ people for decades deserve our respect because we stand on the shoulders of those who came before us. Will those celebrating marriage also fight for the dignity of Tiffany Edwards, who was found shot to death—the fourth reported trans woman of color murdered during the same month as the court's decision?

Some organizations, often local and with far fewer resources, are already doing important work in these and other areas. We would be wise to consider the politics and leadership of younger generations, including students. I look to the organizing of queer and trans youth of color who are active in the immigrant rights, prison justice, and Black Lives Matter movements. They protested and offered critiques of Pride celebrations this summer. Students are making meaningful connections between their academic coursework and their organizing outside of the formal classroom. In doing so, they make their voices heard, lift up important histories and experiences, engage in the struggle, and create real change for themselves and others. Despite my disappointment in the strategies and priorities of many in the LGBTQ community, my experiences with students give me great hope for the future.

So, my intra-community question for LGBTQ activists is this: Do we really love one other in this

Marriage equality has sucked up most of the attention and money at the expense of a wider range of arguably more pressing issues. This important moment for the LGBTQ movement, led by and mostly for the benefit of white, gender-conforming men and women of more comfortable financial means, presents an opportunity to acknowledge and address ongoing divisions and inequalities within the LGBTQ community.

ment to LGBTQ issues. We need to confront issues like access to health care, mass incarceration and state violence, poverty and homelessness, and immigration rights with the same energy and sense of urgency that we took up issues of marriage and military service. Recent events are a painful reminder that striking down antiscegenation laws and desegregating the military didn't, of course, end racism. And we have to refocus now

moment? For love to truly win, we must be able to question and hold accountable a movement that many of us feel alienated from, even damaged by. Now is exactly the appropriate time. So, let's make room for the celebration—this moment does hold possibilities and promise for some of us—but move forward with the understanding and urgency that progress for some of us is not necessarily progress for everyone.

Collections Diversified

BY ROSALIND BLACK '14

All Our Worlds: A Database of Diverse Fantastic Fiction, created by second-year student Kate Diamond for a winter-term project, offers a rare opportunity for readers of every background to both see themselves ensnared in the action and explore worlds far beyond their own.

Diamond began searching for diversity—across race, ability, sexuality, and gender—in sci-fi and fantasy literature when she noticed a recurring complaint among her friends and other consumers of the genre: There wasn't enough diversity in popular sci-fi and fantasy books.

"All the conversations I heard about diverse sci-fi books were people saying, 'This is not enough,' but I found a lot of them," she says. "Yes, there will never be enough, but instead of talking about what doesn't exist, I would like to talk about what does: find the books out there that have the themes people want and share them so the authors get some encouragement, people find the books they want to read, and all of us can work together to inspire more writers."

She's already put the database to good use: She worked with the Oberlin College library to add 100 new books to its collection. To read more, visit oberlin.edu/oam.



BOOKSHELF

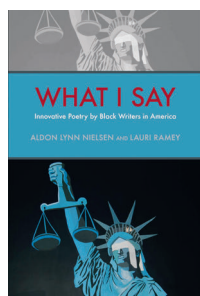
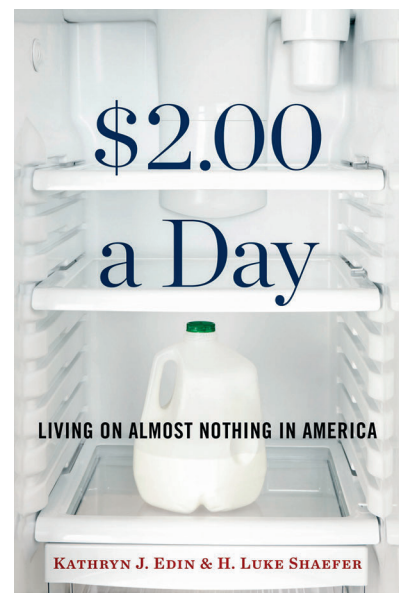
Recent Releases

\$2.00 a Day: Living on Almost Nothing in America
Kathryn J. Edin and Luke Shaefer '81

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN HARCOURT

Shaefer, an associate professor at the University of Michigan School of Social Work and Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy, and Edin, one of the country's leading poverty researchers, noticed a trend they hadn't seen since the mid-1990s: skyrocketing rates of American households surviving on less per person than what most people pay daily for a cup of coffee. These 1.5 million households—a figure that includes about 3 million children—barely scrape by, and only by doing things like donating plasma twice a week or drinking spoiled milk. The book includes dozens of interviews with the men and women for whom this is a reality. *Living on Almost Nothing* is at once an insightful, heartbreaking, and eye-opening look into an entire American population that most of us rarely see.

—Liv Combe '12

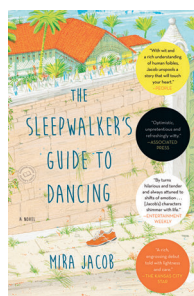


What I Say: Innovative Poetry by Black Writers in America

Edited by Aldon Lynn Nielsen and Lauri Ramey '74

UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA PRESS, 2015

This second of a two-volume anthology shows that some of the best poetry doesn't make it into most textbooks. The first volume covered WWII through the mid-1970s; this brings readers into the present day with the work of innovative modernist poets like Nathaniel Mackey and C.S. Giscombe—exploring how African American poetry has evolved over the course of the 21st century. —LC



The Sleepwalker's Guide to Dancing
Mira Jacob '96

RANDOM HOUSE, 2015

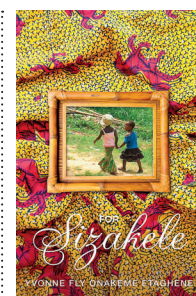
If you believe Tolstoy, each unhappy family is unhappy in its own way. In *The Sleepwalker's Guide to Dancing*, that maxim definitely extends to the Eapens, a family of Indian American immigrants whose saga is told from the perspective of Amina, the oldest daughter. From 1970s India to modern-day Seattle, Jacob unveils a family's ghosts in her debut novel. It's witty, thoughtful, and reminiscent of Jhumpa Lahiri's elegant prose. —LC



Beach House
(which includes *Depression Cherry*)
Alex Scally '04)

SUB POP, 2015

Beach House's fifth LP incorporates the lessons learned throughout the band's career to create a dream pop masterpiece that builds on the best elements of their previous works. The group forgoes its usual distortion, leaving a clear, crisp sound accompanied by resonant lyrics and stark melodies. Taken alone, it is an elegant, catchy, and immersive work of unique pop music; taken as part of a body of work, it seems like a culmination of all that has come before. —Will Hagan



For Sizakele
Yvonne Fly Onakeme Etaghene '02

REDBONE PRESS, 2015

"If there's a book that you want to read, but it hasn't been written yet, then you must write it." Toni Morrison's words inspired Etaghene to write *For Sizakele*, a lyrical novel that follows three characters—Taylor, Lee, and Sy—as they explore issues of love, identity, and what it means to each of them to be a queer woman of color. "We need queer African literature written from queer African perspectives," said Etaghene. "That is why the time for this book is now." —LC

Camy Newman '02 Has a Head for Figures

The plus-size fashions entrepreneur and LaunchU winner wants you to be comfortable in her clothes—and in your own skin.

**By Sarah Ferguson '84
Photograph by Carrol Taveras
for OAM**

Camille “Camy” Newman’s epiphany happened in a department store fitting room during her senior year at Oberlin. “My best friend and I drove to Midway Mall in Elyria. We walked for hours, from store to store. Nothing fit me,” says Newman ’02. “I remember feeling horrible, sick to my stomach. I became disgusted with myself. I decided that no other curvy girl should ever feel that way again.” That’s how the idea for Pop Up Plus, Newman’s New York-based mobile and online designer clothing shop for women sizes 14 and up, sprang to life.

Born in Jamaica, Newman moved to New York City at the age of 12. Her father and grandfather were both entrepreneurs, so the idea of starting a company came naturally to her. After graduating from Oberlin, the African American studies major immersed herself in the world of apparel merchandising, determined to turn her plus-size dreams into a reality. “I started reading all I could about business,” says Newman, “and I decided to get a job in retail so I could learn the industry from the ground up.” She started as an assistant store manager at Lane Bryant’s flagship store in New York. Founded at the turn of the 20th century by Lithuanian immigrant Lena Himmelstein Bryant Malson, who turned a maternity wear business into a line of clothes for “stout-sized” women, Lane Bryant sells sizes 14 to 28 and is still one of the giants in what was once called the “full-figured” fashion industry.

It should come as little surprise that the demand for plus-size clothing has been growing by leaps and bounds in recent years. According to standards set by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 64 percent of U.S. women—more than 100 million Americans—are overweight. In 1985, the average woman wore a size 8. Today, it’s a 14. The industry analyst firm Plunkett Research estimates that women in sizes 14 and up account for 67 percent of the population. No wonder plus-size clothing sales hit \$17.5 billion in 2014, a 3 percent gain from 2013, according to the market-research group NPD. Yet in what remains one of retail’s more puzzling paradoxes, the plus-size category makes up just 17 to 18 percent of the \$116 billion women’s apparel business. What the what? ►



Camy Newman, left, with a model wearing Pop Up Plus apparel. Visit Newman's business: www.popupplusonline.com

If the early days of plus-size fashion were a vast expanse of body-concealing tents and muumuus, today's fashion-forward offerings have evolved to include form-fitting, body-baring styles for body-conscious women eager to celebrate their curves, not hide them. "I saw a huge opportunity in this market," says Newman.

► Traditionally, major department stores carried sizes 0 to 12, called "straight" sizes in the plus-size world. Larger sizes, if sold at all, were typically relegated to a store's basement or top floor or to boutiques with names like The Forgotten Woman. Styles leaned more toward conservative, body-covering basics than anything else. No one knows who wrote the rulebook on plus-size fashion, but for decades the industry clung stubbornly to the notion that women over a certain size couldn't wear anything tight or that bared skin, loud colors or patterns, or horizontal stripes. Trying to find on-trend, plus-size clothing inspired by the runways of New York, Paris, and Milan was like looking for a needle in a haystack. "I'm a size 18 on top and a 14 on bottom. I have a size 40DD chest. I always buy everything in separates," says Newman. "Marilyn Monroe was a size 14. But I had such a hard time finding clothes that fit! I was anxious about going out. I went into a downward spiral. I thought there must be other women who felt the same way."

IF THE EARLY DAYS OF PLUS-SIZE FASHION were a vast expanse of body-concealing tents and muumuus, today's fashion-forward offerings have evolved to include form-fitting, body-baring styles for body-conscious women eager to celebrate their curves, not hide them. "I saw a huge opportunity in this market," says Newman. "There are a lot of plus-size retailers emerging, high- and low-end. You can't be all things to all people. I target the 25- to 44-year-old group. My customers want trends; they're professionals who want to push the limits." Her top-selling items include crop tops and a thigh-baring, sweetheart-neckline romper suit that sold out in no time. It's a far cry from the almost apologetically conservative styles featured in one of Lane Bryant's early marketing campaigns, "Calling All Chubbies."

Newman's Pop Up Plus is in good company. In recent years, Lane Bryant has upped its game, announcing collaborations with Isabel Toledo, a highly respected designer of innovative, architectural clothes, and Lela Rose, a designer known for her party dresses and bridal wear who has dressed Michelle Obama and a host of pretty young celebrities. Eloquii, a new online retailer, is trying to become the Zara equivalent for the plus-size market, offering lower-priced versions of runway trends. Various fast-fashion companies—H&M, Forever 21, Wet Seal, Mango, Asos—have introduced new plus-size collections, and department stores like Macy's have increased their offerings. "We work in the exact same way as Asos core brand," Natasha Smith, a London-based buyer for the new Asos Curve line told the *New York Times*. "There's nothing we wouldn't try: hot pants, bodysuits."

After a succession of jobs in the apparel industry, Newman launched Pop Up Plus in September 2010 as a pop-up shop, a temporary retail venue that opened for two weeks at Metropolitan Green Space in Williamsburg, Brooklyn. "At first I was going to open a boutique," says Newman. "In true Oberlin fashion, I wrote a 25-page proposal." But a pop-up shop proved to be a quicker and more economical way to enter the market. "We had dressing rooms and everything," says Newman. "We literally create a boutique base in 24 hours." That first iteration of Pop Up Plus carried plus-sized fashion from Seventh Avenue mainstays like Michael Kors, Ralph Lauren, Calvin Klein, and a host of indie designers. "My price point was very high when I started—\$200 or \$300 for one piece," says Newman. "My customers

wanted something less; I'm at the lower end now." Crop tops sell for between \$22 and \$28; the most expensive items on the site these days retail for under \$65. To find inventory, Newman attends trade shows such as the Fame Junior/Young Contemporary show, and she's hoping to launch a line of specially designed private label clothes in the near future. "There are a lot of well-made products at the trade shows, but only a couple of plus-size vendors. They're missing a big opportunity. I choose the best of that bunch," she says.

Newman opened subsequent pop-up shops in Virginia and Boston and plans to bring her fashion-forward clothes to smaller towns with no plus-size retailers, places where young women who wear over a size 12 have found shopping for, say, prom dresses an exercise in frustration and futility. Pop Up Plus expanded into online sales in 2013; fashion, style, and beauty websites like Refinery 29 and independent bloggers from the plus-size community have been a valuable source of word-of-mouth advertising. Every three months, the company releases a new look book on its website, popupplushonline.com, with photographs of a model wearing the site's latest offerings.

"Our last look book was shot in downtown Brooklyn, featuring a 200-pound girl in heels, wearing all white," Newman says. The photos are fierce and fabulous, a far cry from earlier generations of advertising campaigns in which plus-size clothes were often photographed on models who wore size 12 or even smaller—sending a very mixed message to potential customers. "Our merchandise return rate is very good, only 10 percent," says Newman. "Other companies have a 25 to 30 percent return rate." For now, Newman is plowing all proceeds back into the business. "The biggest challenge is not having the funding to go after the market."

In January 2015, Newman competed in LaunchU, Oberlin's venture accelerator and pitch competition. The three-year-old program is designed to provide resources, training, advisors, connections, and investment capital to help start, accelerate, and grow Oberlin student, alumni, and faculty ventures. Twenty teams took part in the accelerator course in 2015 and then pitched their ventures to a panel of judges and potential investors for \$45,000 in prize money. Most were on campus for the three-week program, but Newman participated remotely, so she could continue working at her day job in New York City. "I recorded a seven-minute pitch, then I had to read two 500-page books and work with a mentor. After that, I made a second pitch. It was pretty grueling," she says. "I got to Oberlin the last week of January. I

didn't think I was going to win."

"Camy's Pop Up Plus pitch was incredibly compelling because she identified a true unmet customer need that she was passionate about, and she had an entrepreneur's work ethic, having run her new business on the side for years while working a full-time job," says Eugene Carr '82, founder and CEO of Patron Technology and chair of the LaunchU advisory board. "When she described going to the New York Post Office at midnight to ship orders, I knew she'd be a success."

Newman won the Joseph Rubin Venture Prize, and was awarded \$15,000 to help take Pop Up Plus to the next level. She hopes to use some of the money to purchase a truck to convert into a mobile store on wheels. "I need Ford to sponsor!" she says. In case that doesn't come through, she's planning on launching a Kickstarter campaign to raise the funds.

"Body-conscious plus-size clothing is a very urban, big city movement. I really do think that's where Pop Up Plus has a huge opportunity. I love dressing all these curvy girls, inspiring them to be brave and confident. It's really about looking great at your current size. Let's deal with today: what size are you today? Don't stop living because of your weight. It's truly my passion to inspire confidence," says Newman.

Oberlin College Professor of History Carol Lasser, director of the gender, sexuality and feminist studies program, isn't surprised that an Oberlin graduate would launch a business that functions as a critique of restrictive contemporary attitudes toward women. "Feminisms have always meant women defining themselves, including their desired bodies, rather than seeking approval from a male gaze," she says. "Feminism is about changing expectations of women, including how we look."

Lasser says such issues are particularly germane on a college campus. "I think that for women of this age range, issues of weight and body image have been real touch points. Women at this point in their lives are very conscious of their body image. They're told, 'This is the way you should look.' There are social stigmas around weight and body image. Oberlin's particular contribution here is in recognizing the oppression and second-class status of certain groups."

There's a history of activism surrounding weight that stretches back to the 1960s. The first "fat activists" held a "Fat-In" in New York City's Central Park, eating ice cream and burning posters of Twiggy, the stick-thin, androgynous British fashion model whose 5'6" 112-pound body set the standard for the era. Cut to 2014, when Meghan Trainor, a 5'2" singer-songwriter whose weight has been reported to

be between 150 and 175 pounds, burst onto the charts with "All About That Bass," a bubblegum pop song whose lyrics flaunt her full-figured form and proudly announce, "I won't be no stick figure silicone Barbie doll, so if that's what you're into, then go 'head and move along." And then there's Lena Dunham '08, whose recent appearance in a bikini for a charity paddleboard race helped solidify Newman's admiration for her. "We absolutely love Lena Dunham at Pop Up Plus," says Newman. "She is an inspiration to us. She is never afraid to flaunt her curves."

Some argue that the body positivity movement doesn't address genuine and worthwhile concerns about health issues. After all, the American Medical Association declared obesity a disease in 2013, arguing that the designation would help fight against Type II diabetes and heart disease. Critics countered that there's no universally agreed upon definition of what constitutes a disease, and that the Body Mass Index used to assess obesity is a simplistic and flawed measuring tool. On the other hand, the 'healthy living at every size' paradigm clearly doesn't extend to extremes on either end of the spectrum, and food addiction and emotional eating can be genuine psychological problems. One thing is for certain: In the context of social justice movements, racial prejudice, religious intolerance, and homophobia have been roundly condemned, yet weight shaming persists, often cloaked in the guise of healthy concern.

Newman notes that there are also cultural differences that help determine attitudes toward the plus-size figure. "Think about the black entertainment industry: if you have a big butt, that's a good thing these days," she says. "When I was growing up in Jamaica, there was no pressure to be skinny. I was told that if you're curvier, it's easier to find a man. I didn't feel any pressure when I moved to the U.S., either. The pressure to lose weight started for me when I joined the working world. The fashion industry has a very narrow definition of what's beautiful: skinny, white, and blond."

"Many of my Caucasian customers talk about wanting to lose weight. But the majority of black women own their curves. It's an African diaspora thing. It's about self-empowerment and reminding women they're beautiful. Being an Obie is a unique experience. We were protesting homelessness; we were socially aware. And then when I joined the real world, I met people who majored in public relations and marketing. It was a different level of consciousness. Women need to be reeducated about their bodies: how to be confident and take fashion risks. They need to be reminded it's OK to be beautiful. It's OK to be you."

Newman hopes Pop Up Plus will be one of those reminders. Among the projects on the horizon for Newman is something called PopUpPalooza, which she describes as an "all-encompassing, day-long celebration of curves" that is projected take place in Chicago this fall.

"We're going to get the curvy community fully involved," says Newman. "There will be panels on the curvy lifestyle and curvy dating. We can put our stamp on that. The Pop Up Plus customer is a rebel. She's not afraid to take a risk. If I can be responsible for a curvy girl feeling confident, I will sign up for that as my life goal." ■

SARAH FERGUSON'S ESSAYS AND CRITICISM HAVE APPEARED IN *NEW YORK MAGAZINE*, *THE GUARDIAN*, *ELLE*, AND *THE NEW YORK TIMES BOOK REVIEW*.

Every three months, the company releases a new look book on its website with photographs of a model wearing the site's latest offerings. "Our last look book was shot in downtown Brooklyn, on a 200-pound girl in heels, wearing all white," says Newman.



A simple vine serves as a living memorial to an Oberlin student lost to World War II.

By Erik Inglis '89 | Illustration by ZB for OAM

Opposite: A portrait of Herb Derwig on the front porch of Wilder Hall—the Men's Building—taken by his classmate Jim Sunshine '46.



IT'S AN INCONSPICUOUS location for a monument, by the back door to Wilder, facing away from the traffic shuttling in and out of Decafé, the old Snackbar.

"Herb Derwig's Ivy," it reads, naming the adjacent green patch.

Given the modest tag and more modest location, it's no surprise that very few people at Oberlin know about it.

I'd been here a decade before I noticed it. The monument might thus appear to confirm Robert Musil's observation that "there is nothing in the world as invisible as monuments...they are somehow impregnated against attention." On the other hand, there is also something to be said for modest monuments—for when they finally attract your attention, they may capture it more completely than more elaborate examples.

This monument commemorates former Oberlin student Herbert Derwig, who was killed by a landmine on January 9, 1945, in Belgium during the Battle of the Bulge. The story of his monument is told in the Oberlin College Archives.

Derwig was born in 1924 in Gloversville, New York, where his father, George Derwig, was a Lutheran minister (a path also pursued by Herbert's brother George). He applied to Oberlin in the spring of 1942; his application indicates a love of camping, a mature independence, and a number of friends already at Oberlin. He also wrote, "As to my future—in these times one may not be sure of anything." Accepted, Herb enrolled at Oberlin in the fall, living in Men's Building (now known as Wilder Hall). He seems to have made an immediate impression: He was president of his class and was described by classmate Jim Sunshine '46 as "irrepressible," "immensely popular," and "unbeatable at ping-pong."

But Herb attended Oberlin for only a year; he left for the military in 1943. Ernest Hatch Wilkins, Oberlin's president in these years,

corresponded with many of the Oberlin students who were in the services. He received a letter from Herb on May 10, 1944, written at Camp Gordon in Georgia, in which Herb writes, "although I spent only one year at Oberlin, it was a happy one." Keen to keep learning, Herb requested a copy of Thorstein Veblen's *Absentee Ownership and Business Enterprise in Recent Times: The Case of America*. Replying in June, Wilkins reported that he'd ordered a copy and would forward it as soon as it arrived. Wilkins also wrote:

"What a lot has happened since you wrote, on all fronts, east and west! We certainly seem to be converging on Berlin and Tokyo, though there's plenty of hard fighting ahead still. In Oberlin now we have 10-minute summaries of war news twice a week, illustrated with stereopticon slides of newspaper maps showing the latest developments."

Herb went to Europe in September 1944, serving as a radio technician in the 10th Armored Division. The college did not have a new address for him; while Herb was in Bastogne for Christmas, the college sent a holiday card to him at Camp Gordon dated December 8, 1944. It never reached him. It was eventually returned to Oberlin, with a handwritten "deceased" and the initials and stamp of Leroy F. Kehr, a warrant officer. The card, in Oberlin's archive, is unopened still, a monument in its own right.

Six weeks after Herb's death, his father, George, wrote to President Wilkins, thanking him for "all the kindnesses and courtesies extended to my son Herbert during his year at Oberlin. He always spoke of that year as a happy one." He also mentioned how much Herb had appreciated Wilkins' letters.

Wilkins replied to George Derwig immediately: "Dear Mr. Derwig: It was more than good of you to write me: I shall value your letter as much as if it had come from Herbert—I can't say more." He reports on the letters he had received from Herb and sent a copy of one. The striking emphasis on letters makes sense, for Wilkins was a literary scholar who specialized in Petrarch, the 14th-century Italian humanist who owed much of his reputation to his letters. Wilkins' letter continues: "In a sense relatively

slight, yet definitely true, I am in your place: for he was a son of this Alma Mater, and a son whose brief stay here left an honorable and a friendly memory. I have thus far been spared the tragedy of the corresponding personal loss; but the weight of grief that increases with the lengthening of the sacrificial roll of splendid youth is very heavy for me—so heavy that I dare to think myself in some measure entitled to extend to you my deep sympathy, in the fullest sense of that noble word."

Two more letters from George Derwig report information about his son's death. On April 10, he reports learning that Herb had been guiding a vehicle through a minefield "when an enemy artillery shell set off a mine somewhere in the field. Herbert was not hit. There was not a scratch on him. Death was caused by the concussion, which is said to break one up inside. This is unofficial information we have gleaned from members of his division."

May 8 brought victory in Europe, and on June 2 Wilkins sent Derwig the program for a memorial service in which Herb and Oberlin's other lost students had been remembered. Derwig replied on June 5, thanking him for the program and relaying the official account of Herb's death that he had received from a military chaplain: "Some days after the garrison of Bastogne (where Herb spent Christmas) had been freed, Herb and another man were given the mission of going forward to the lines with a radio 'Peep' [*sic*] to establish a forward communication front. Herb walked behind the vehicle as they slowly moved forward. He took this precaution against expected artillery fire. The vehicle ran over a mine buried in the road, and it seems that the concussion hit in Herb's direction. The driver immediately stopped the 'peep' and, calling for a medic, ran back to where Herb was lying in the road. When the aid man came a few minutes later, he pronounced Herb dead. There was not a mark on his body, not a drop of blood. He was killed instantly, simply by the concussion of the explosion. Pardon this scrawl. This report has upset me more than I realized. Sincerely, G. A. Derwig."

The father's next letter was written on January 4, 1946, and brings us closer to the monument:

It is a quiet monument, a little vine and a name, with no dates nor cause of death. But the ivy was planted by the building where Herb lived during his all-too-brief time at Oberlin and aimed to grow into the future he did not get to know.



LIVING MEMORIAL Front row, left to right: Dick Eisenhower '48, Wally Sikes '49, Dick Weeks, President Wilkins, Bernie Weiner '46, John Rumely '46; Back row, left to right: Tom Morgan '48, Bob Southey '46, Dave Fowler '48, Vince Rosenthal '49, Bob Avery '48, Jack Kinley '48, Jerry De Witt '48, Bill Knapp '49

*"My dear Dr. Wilkins:
Enclosed find a check for \$25.00
as a memorial to our son Herbert.
The 9th of this month is the
anniversary of his death. Please
[use] this amount where,
according to your judgment, it
will do the most good."*

Wilkins replied promptly:

*Dear Mr. Derwig:
My heartiest thanks to you for your
gift of \$25.00 as a memorial to
Herbert.*

*I shall want to use this very
carefully, and shall probably hold it for
some time until I am perfectly sure
that I have the best use for it.
Whenever I do use it I shall write you
again. My own son comes home today
after four years of army service: how I
wish such joy might have been yours!*

*Yours gratefully,
EH Wilkins*

Wilkins was then in the last year of his presidency, and as he predicted he held the gift until the end. In a letter written to George Derwig on August 26, Wilkins reported that,

*At noon on Saturday, August 24, I
planted an ivy which is to be a
memorial for Herbert. It will grow
over one of the walls of the Men's
Building in which he lived while he
was here. Into the stone near the point
where the ivy is planted there will be
engraved the words HERB
DERWIG'S IVY. The gift you sent me
last winter will suffice to provide for
the care of the plant and for its
replacement if replacement should be
necessary.*

*Several of Herbert's friends are in
college this Summer; and about a
dozen of them gathered to watch the
planting. A photograph of the group
was taken; and if it comes out well, a
copy of it will be sent to you.*

This planting was my last

*ceremonial action as President of
Oberlin College.*

*With all good wishes,
Yours cordially,
EH Wilkins*

It is a quiet monument, a little vine and a name, with no dates nor cause of death. But the ivy was planted by the building where Herb lived during his all-too-brief time at Oberlin and aimed to grow into the future he did not get to know. The same sensibility appears in Wilkins' remarks at Memorial Day in 1946, when Oberlin remembered Herb Derwig and 56 other alumni who died in the war: "It is not enough just to remember," Wilkins told the assembly. "Their lives in a sense will continue as they are fulfilled through you."

Herb's parents appreciated the memorial. The last letter in the Wilkins-Derwig correspondence was signed by George and his wife, Louise, dated September 12, 1946.

My Dear Dr. Wilkins:

*We were deeply moved by your letter
telling us of the planting of 'Herb's Ivy,'
and also by the photograph which came
a few days ago. We are as lost for words
to express just what we feel, that you
will understand if we merely say
from the bottom of our hearts: "We
thank you!"*

The modest ivy was remembered. When alumni of the World War II years came together 50 years later to create a larger memorial for classmates who had died in the war—their ranks now increased to 75—they transplanted some of Herb Derwig's ivy to the garden around the new monument, which was engraved with the words Wilkins spoke at Memorial Day in 1946.


Jim Sunshine, who served on the committee that supervised the creation of the college's World War II Memorial and has written movingly of the war's impact on him and his classmates, has guided my understanding of both these monuments. Jim took the only picture I know of that shows Herb Derwig at the Men's Building, lying on one of the stone banisters at the main entrance and smiling to beat the band. I never knew Herb Derwig, but this is how I like to remember him. ■

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CLEARWATER MILLS
INNOVATIVE & SUSTAINABLE TECHNOLOGIES

BIG WHEEL KEEP ON



CLEAN MACHINE
Clearwater Mills'
river-cleaning
barge in the
Baltimore Harbor.

TURNING

Can a quirky contraption created by
John Kellett '85 clean up our waterways?
BY BEN COSGROVE '87

N

AVIGATING BALTIMORE'S INNER Harbor aboard an old party boat that he long ago converted into a small, workmanlike barge-pusher, John Kellett looks every inch the urban mariner. As a biting wind raises whitecaps on the water, Kellett—wearing a black knit cap and a yellow safety jacket blotched here and there with oil and grease—maneuvers his bare-bones craft from its berth near the city's Living Classrooms complex, north past the Four Seasons hotel, and into a narrow, concrete-walled slip of water, where the Jones Falls River empties into the harbor.

There, perhaps a hundred yards away and anchored just south of a pedestrian bridge, floats something that Verne's Captain Nemo might have designed on one of his cheerier days. The contraption possesses a kind of quirky, utilitarian charm—although it would be difficult for anyone unfamiliar with it to guess, from this vantage point and distance, just what its purpose is.

A bit nearer, details emerge. That shape looming on the right of the structure is certainly a wheel, a large, wide, metal wheel, motionless at the moment. The gleaming grid work on its ribbed, white canopy resolves into an array of solar panels.

"I wonder what the river brought us today," Kellett says a few minutes later, pitching his voice above the low rumble of the outboard motor. With a light thud, the boat sidles against one of the framework's massive, steel pontoons. We tie up, hitching lines to cleats on the deck; step up on to the deck itself; and peer into a dumpster resting atop a small barge moored aft. Covering the bottom of the dumpster, perhaps a foot deep, are plastic bottles of various shapes and sizes; leaves, sticks and other organic goodies; a battered Spackle bucket; Styrofoam cups; takeout containers; countless cigarette butts; junk-food bags and other dreck—a self-contained, parti-colored galaxy of carelessly discarded crap.

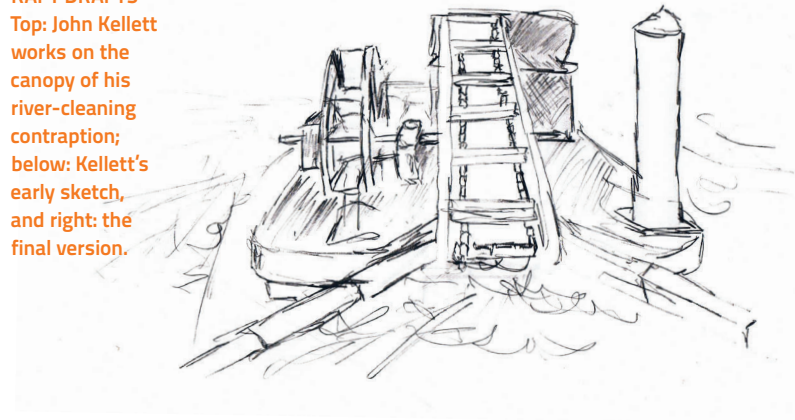
In the grand scheme of things, and especially in light of the 8 million metric tons of plastic waste that end up in our seas each year, a few hundred pounds of garbage is the proverbial drop in the ocean. As it happens, though, that drop is very much the salient point: after all, Kellett's waterwheel might be the most effective mechanical device anyone has ever invented to keep trash out of harbors and bays before that garbage floats into the ocean, beyond sight of land. This one machine does what it was designed to do: pull trash, a *lot* of trash, from the river. Watching it operate, it's hard not to imagine what a score, a hundred, a thousand waterwheel-powered trash interceptors anchored in harbors around the globe might accomplish.

That very scenario, incidentally, isn't far-fetched. Kellett has been contacted by representatives from other cities and countries about the practical opportunities and challenges associated with the machine. A delegation from Indonesia visited the wheel last year, and Kellett has had planning discussions with groups and government reps from India, Spain, Washington, D.C., and Philadelphia. There are serious talks about building a number of wheels and taking them to Rio ahead of next year's summer Olympic Games—with special emphasis on Guanabara Bay, the horribly polluted venue planned for some sailing events. As Kellett points out: "A quick Google image search of 'urban river trash' gives you a pretty graphic sense of how massive the problem is. Cities and towns all over the world are



RAFT DRAFTS

Top: John Kellett works on the canopy of his river-cleaning contraption; below: Kellett's early sketch, and right: the final version.



struggling with this. We know the waterwheel can help. We see it every day."

And not only have countries and municipalities come calling. The waterwheel team sent some of its intercepted trash to Germany, where BMW evidently wants to recycle this sort of detritus into material it can use on cars.

The story of how the waterwheel came to be, meanwhile, is something of an object lesson—not only in the power of a good idea, but in the value of that least-celebrated characteristic of the true innovator: plain old bulldog tenacity.

KELLETT—WHO GRADUATED FROM OBERLIN IN 1985 WITH A DEGREE IN religion and "a lot of environmental science classes" thrown in for good measure—is a sizeable man (over 6 feet tall, a solid 220 pounds) whose movements can hint at huge latent strength or thoughtful finesse, depending on the task at hand.

Pointing to the slender pedestrian bridge over the Jones Falls River and to a building just west of the span where he worked for 10 years, Kellett recalls the decision he made a decade ago that launched him on this journey.

"When I was the director of the Baltimore Maritime Museum, I walked across that foot bridge every day," he says. "And every day I'd hear tourists talking about how beautiful the harbor was—or how beautiful it would be if not filled with trash. I love Baltimore, and I got tired of hearing the same



complaint over and over again about the harbor. I decided that instead of bitching about it, I'd try and do something about it."

Like any good inventor, Kellett began his quixotic venture with a sketch. (That first drawing hangs today, framed, in the rural Maryland house he shares with his wife, Pamela Tenner Kellett '89, and their teenage children, Luke and Thea.) Recalling a wheel-powered hay baler that his family used for a season in Gettysburg when he was a kid—his dad was a math professor at Gettysburg College, his mother taught at Dickinson Law School, and they farmed their land—Kellett figured that a similar machine, anchored at the mouth of a river, might capture garbage before it dispersed into the wider waters. Instead of a baler, he envisioned an inclined conveyor belt tirelessly pulling trash from the waves.

It would work, Kellett thought. Why wouldn't it? The concept was sound. Now, he just had to build it.

LIKE SO MANY GREAT CITIES, BALTIMORE OWES ITS NUMEROUS LIVES—its various incarnations—to its harbor. Baltimore has remained a crucial East Coast hub since its founding 300 years ago, in part by repeatedly reinventing itself and its industries. In the 18th century, merchants shipped tons of tobacco and other goods overseas from its bustling wharves. Oyster canneries, sugar refineries, steel manufacturing, and shipbuilding kept the

city and its port humming throughout the 19th century and into the middle of the 20th, until a declining population and tectonic changes across American manufacturing threatened to gut the community in the same way that many other strongly blue-collar cities and towns were hammered in the '60s and '70s. Reminders of Baltimore's grittier past still dot the landscape around the harbor, where waters flow past Locust Point and Fort McHenry on the western shore, past the huge Seagirt Marine and Mid-Atlantic shipping terminals to the east, and down into the widening sweep of the Chesapeake Bay and to the sea 200 miles away.

While it has endured its share of post-industrial pain and, more recently, scrutiny over its enduring racial divide, Baltimore has, in the past few decades, transformed itself yet again, this time betting on the Inner Harbor as a magnet for two modern urban enterprises: tourism and gentrification. A dizzying array of cultural and "edutainment" gems (the National Aquarium, the American Visionary Art Museum), refurbished historical sites, and dismayingly predictable chains—a Hard Rock Café here, a Bubba Gump Shrimp Co. there—now largely define the Inner Harbor's new sensibility.

And yet, in the midst of this generally uplifting narrative of civic reinvention, one crucial, troubled element remained: namely, the water. By the time the 21st century rolled around, Baltimore's greatest natural resource was, in a word, disgusting.



SUN SCREEN Solar panels power water pumps to turn the waterwheel. Right: The conveyor pulls the litter from the waterway.



“WHAT I REMEMBER CLEARLY,” KELLETT SAYS ABOUT THE EARLY DAYS of designing and building the waterwheel, “is how pretty much everyone we spoke to here in Baltimore said it wouldn’t work. They were so certain—not only that a trash interceptor was pointless, but that the notion of cleaning up the harbor at all was a lost cause. It was like everyone had given up before we even began.”

One of the first people to see the potential in what Kellett and Daniel Chase, his partner in the Clearwater Mills waterwheel company, were hoping to build was Bob Embry, longtime president of the private, \$350-million, Baltimore-based Abell Foundation. After Embry saw a scale-model prototype of the wheel—“I was sure he wouldn’t give us a dime because he seemed totally unimpressed by my demonstration,” Kellett recalls—the foundation came through with \$350,000 to build the first incarnation of the machine. The Abell money was a loan, in a sense, to the city of Baltimore, which balked at funding the wheel until it was proven to work. After an eight-month trial period, in which the waterwheel removed 300,000 pounds of trash from the harbor, the city purchased the wheel, paying the Abell Foundation back, with interest.

“The fact that this project addressed a local issue, the fouling of our waters, and that it was initiated by a local industry that could potentially be marketed to other cities made it really appealing to us,” says Embry, who

has since become friendly with Kellett.

The first incarnation of the trash interceptor—remarkably close in its overall look and feel to Kellett’s long-ago pencil sketch—bore scant resemblance to the stirring, curvilinear present-day machine. In fact, Clearwater Mills’ first waterwheel, which went into operation in the Inner Harbor in 2008, was a decidedly homey affair. A shed-like structure housed the wheel’s workings: the wheel itself, the conveyor belt, all the moving parts, mainly to keep trash from blowing around once pulled from the water, but also to hide the guts of the machine from passersby.

The waterwheel now anchored at Jones Falls has, in effect, turned the original version’s aesthetic inside out. Today’s 50-ton, 50-foot-long machine—held in place by enormous pilings driven 60 feet into the riverbed—seems almost to be preening in place. Its 14-foot-in-diameter wheel is out in the open for all to see, its on-deck machinery visible beneath its most striking feature: the nautilus-like, solar panel-covered canopy. From the first waterwheel to this iteration, designed by Ziger/Snead Architects in Baltimore, it’s as if a Model-T gave way to a Tesla, without a sign of the countless changes that generations of car designers brought to the drawing board.

What might at first glance seem a decidedly Rube Goldbergian instrument is, in fact, an ingenious and straightforward feat of imagination and

"WHAT I REMEMBER CLEARLY," KELLETT SAYS ABOUT THE EARLY DAYS OF DESIGNING AND BUILDING THE WATERWHEEL, "IS HOW PRETTY MUCH EVERYONE WE SPOKE TO HERE IN BALTIMORE SAID IT WOULDN'T WORK. THEY WERE SO CERTAIN—NOT ONLY THAT A TRASH INTERCEPTOR WAS POINTLESS, BUT THAT THE NOTION OF CLEANING UP THE HARBOR AT ALL WAS A LOST CAUSE. IT WAS LIKE EVERYONE HAD GIVEN UP BEFORE WE EVEN BEGAN."

engineering. The wheel itself can be turned by the river's current, and often is. The wheel then drives a shaft that powers a chain that operates the conveyor belt. Floating booms funnel debris to the conveyor, which pulls pretty much anything that emerges from the river—from candy bar wrappers to logs and truck tires—up and over into the dumpster at the back of the rig.

The 30 solar panels, meanwhile, can generate 3 kilowatts of power—juice that's stored in 24 golf cart batteries, which in turn power four water pumps located beneath the deck. When the river's current is slack, the pumps pull water from the river; the water flows through pipes that run across the deck to the wheel; the water from the pipes empties into the wheel's 24 buckets; and the weight of the water steadily turns the wheel itself—which, again, drives the shaft that powers the chain that operates the conveyor belt.

The city of Baltimore pays to cart the trash to a local incinerator; right now, there's no economically feasible way to sort recyclable material from the other debris. When incinerated at the Baltimore Refuse Energy Systems Company (BRESO) waste-to-energy plant—whose pale, 300-foot-tall smokestack, not far from I-95 in South Baltimore, is something of a regional landmark—each ton of trash from the waterwheel generates up to 400 hours of electricity for Maryland homes.

Whether put in motion by the river current or by those solar-powered water pumps beneath the deck, the wheel is as sustainable and efficient a trash collector as one is likely to find. It's impossible, when standing on the machine's deck and watching it work, not to marvel at its elegant marriage of ancient and cutting-edge tech.

If utility is beauty, the waterwheel-powered trash interceptor is a masterpiece.

Daniel Chase, the Clearwater Mills' operation manager whose construction background was crucial in helping to engineer the machine's components, including factoring stress loads and calculating water pressure on the wheel itself, believes there's an elemental reason for the wheel's broad appeal.

"It's a simple machine, which also explains why it's so efficient," Chase says. "It's not only simple on the operational end, but on the maintenance side of things, too. We can look after it ourselves." Clearwater Mills operates and maintains the waterwheel as part of a \$100,000 annual contract with the Waterfront Partnership, a business improvement district whose board is made up of the heads of major Baltimore-based companies like T. Rowe Price, Brown Advisory, and Legg Mason. The Maryland Port Administration and Constellation Energy, the latter for decades an independent company headquartered in Baltimore and now the renewable-energy arm of Exelon Corporation, together picked up the \$800,000 tab for construction of the current machine, with \$500,000 and \$300,000, respectively.

"All the companies associated with the Waterfront Partnership understand that the success of Baltimore is linked to the success and health of the harbor," says Adam Lindquist, manager of the partnership's Healthy Harbor Initiative. "Our goal is a swimmable, fishable harbor by the year 2020, and the waterwheel is integral to that vision. I think that many of the young professionals moving to Baltimore and driving its economy are fans of the waterwheel not only because it's innovative, but because it works. It's not

just a rendering or a computer model of some speculative plan for cleaning up the harbor. People have rendering fatigue these days. They want results, and the waterwheel delivers."

Does it ever. Since it first began churning a year and a half ago, the machine has pulled roughly 200 tons of trash from the water. "The wheel once pulled in excess of 50,000 pounds of trash out of the Jones Falls in one day," Kellett says. "Each dumpster can hold five tons—but we've had days, especially after big storms when the water's really running, when they've carried more than that."

Beyond the perseverance that Kellett and his colleagues have demonstrated over the past eight years in pushing their dream from drawing to prototype to eye-popping gadget, one aspect that most everyone celebrates is how thoroughly collaborative the process has been. John Kellett's idea was the original spark, but the enterprise has been fleshed out by family members. His younger brother, Paul '88, for example, served as a procurement specialist for the wheel. An avid auction-goer, Paul has a pronounced gift for "envisioning future uses of materials before John even knows he needs them," says John's wife, Pamela. John's nephew, Nate Appleby-Kellett '11, helped build the wheel and is one of its primary operators.

Pamela, who captained and taught on tall ships for years, still maintains a Master's license for vessels up to 100 tons and writes an environmental column for the regional sailing publication *SpinSheet*. From the beginning, she's tackled the administrative work for Clearwater Mills. More recently, while pursuing a master's degree in environmental science at Johns Hopkins, she has advised on systematic aspects of the machine—hydrology, stream flow, and the like.

LEAVING THE WATERWHEEL IN THE BARGE-PUSHER'S WAKE, Kellett pilots through waters he's known for years—often sailing here in boats and ships that he built or restored. Instead of steering straight back to the marina, he turns northwest, unhurriedly heading deeper into the Inner Harbor. The afternoon sun casts a warm light on familiar sights. The National Aquarium. The 85-year-old lightship *Chesapeake*.

"The whole reason that Daniel and I—and everyone else—have been plugging away at the waterwheel for so long is because we love the harbor," Kellett says. "We've made a difference out here, and anyone who uses the harbor notices it. The water taxis, the people at the marina—even the guys on the city's trash-skimmer boats have told us that it's getting hard to find anything to pick up anymore. That's what it was about for us from the beginning. Obviously, we want to build a viable business out of the waterwheel. But it all started with finding a way to clean up the harbor. It was that simple."

Kellett swings the boat around in a broad, smooth arc, heading home. The wind has fallen. The whitecaps are lying down. As far as the eye can see, the Inner Harbor's dark waves are shining. ■

BEN COSGROVE IS A WRITER AND EDITOR IN BROOKLYN, NEW YORK. HIS WORK HAS APPEARED IN THE *WASHINGTON POST*, *TIME*, *SALON*, *THE DAILY BEAST*, AND OTHER PUBLICATIONS ONLINE AND OFF.



ALUMNI TRAVEL PROGRAM



CUBA: THE PEARL OF THE ANTILLES

March 19-26, 2016 | Escorted by Oberlin Professor of Hispanic Studies Ana Cara

Due to overwhelming demand, we are pleased to offer another trip to Cuba. Join fellow Obies and Professor Ana Cara on a people-to-people delegation to build friendship with our Cuban neighbors, see the architecture, savor rich cuisine, and experience soul-moving music. There is no better time to visit this fascinating neighbor during this time of historic change. Our tour will focus on the arts, both contemporary and folk, and include must-see destinations such as the colonial city of Havana, Ernest Hemingway's home, and museums. However, it is the personal connections with artists, musicians, chefs, and religious practitioners—in partnership with Project Por Amor—that will make this tour magical. Visit Havana's premier graphic arts workshop, artist studios, dance company rehearsals, and performances of African and Hispanic folkloric music. Spend evenings listening to Cuban rhythms and attending music and dance performances. Brochure available.



IN THE WAKE OF THE VIKINGS: SCOTLAND/ NORWAY/DENMARK

June 8-16, 2016 | Escorted by Professor of English Nicholas Jones

Join us for a unique, nine-day journey to Scotland's rarely visited Inner Hebridean, Orkney and Shetland Islands, and Norway's majestic coastal fjords, remote destinations forever linked by their Viking heritage. Cruise from Glasgow, Scotland, to Copenhagen, Denmark, aboard the exclusively chartered Five-Star small ship M.S. LE BORÉAL with spacious, 100% ocean-view Stateroom and Suite accommodations. Travel in the wake of early Viking explorers, cruising into ports accessible only to small ships amid spectacular landscapes in this seafaring region steeped in history and cultural richness. Specially arranged excursions include a journey on The Jacobite steam train through the Scottish Highlands; Kirkwall in the Orkney Islands; prehistoric Jarlshof in the Shetland Islands; and the UNESCO World heritage sites of Orkney's Neolithic Ring of Brodgar and Skara Brae. A Glasgow/Edinburgh Pre-Cruise Option and Copenhagen Post-Cruise Option are offered. Brochure available.



VILLAGE LIFE IN THE DORDOGNE

October 13-21, 2016 | Escorted by Professor of Musicology Charles McGuire

Experience the joys of life in the heart of southwestern France's Dordogne River Valley, a delightful region renowned for its stunning beauty, delectable cuisine, splendid castles and charming villages. From your base in the historic town of Sarlat-la-Canéda—officially recognized as one of France's best-preserved medieval villages—explore the region's numerous historic, cultural and natural attractions, including the prehistoric cave art of Lascaux II and Rouffignac, Richard the Lionheart's castle at Beynac, the ancient fortified town of Domme, and the dramatic cliff-side town of Rocamadour, one of Europe's most important pilgrimage destinations during the Middle Ages. Your experience will be enhanced with exclusive lectures and the Village Forum discussion with local residents. Your enjoyment of the region's gastronomic bounty will be enhanced by special daily meals and at Sarlat-la-Canéda's colorful outdoor market, a village tradition that dates to the Middle Ages. Brochure soon available.

For more information about alumni travel opportunities, visit <http://new.oberlin.edu/office/alumni/travel-tours/>. If you would like to receive electronic news and brochures about our programs, please call 440-775-8692 or e-mail deb.stanfield@oberlin.edu. Please consider traveling with fellow Obies! Oberlin parents are always welcome!



LOOKING FORWARD

THIS YEAR, WE'RE CELEBRATING ANOTHER BIRTHDAY—another milestone in Oberlin's history. The Conservatory of Music is turning 150! For 150/182nds of the existence of Oberlin College, students have been graced by the presence of the Con and the incredible richness that its students and faculty bring to campus.

Music is everywhere at Oberlin. A quick glance at any weekly calendar shows you the variety of musical offerings across the campus and town. I'm one of many people who came to Oberlin not to major in music in the Con, but for whom the presence of this extraordinary facility was an integral element of the force that drew me here. I played oboe in high school and, at Oberlin, was fortunate to study for two-plus years with three oboe professors—Messrs. Rapier, Schulman and Caldwell—before realizing that my passion lay not with the pursuit of music at the level that the conservatory demands (of all students, even non-majors) but elsewhere. So I stopped taking lessons but continued playing for a time. Now, each time I return to campus I marvel at the wondrous color and light that the Con weaves into the fabric of life at Oberlin. The variety of opportunities for students, the range of offerings for the enjoyment and enrichment of all, are truly stunning. I read recently that music is the birthright of children, and we are truly blessed to have had our education and our lives immeasurably enhanced by this pervasive influence, sometimes subtly, sometimes with the kind of blunt force that I experienced the first time I heard (and felt) the orchestra play Beethoven's Seventh Symphony. So, please join me in saying "Happy Birthday Conservatory!"—and find a way to join the celebration, whether by web streaming one of the concerts (find them at new.oberlin.edu/conservatory) or by attending a concert by a student ensemble or an alum who might be performing in your area.

And even as we honor the past, the Oberlin community is also looking toward the future. You probably remember that several months ago we had a virtual town meeting in which President Marvin Krislov answered questions about the ongoing strategic planning process, a stimulating conversation that the leadership of the process hopes to complete by March 2016. Being part of the steering committee, along with members of the faculty, staff, Board of Trustees, and Andrea Hargrave '97, another at-large alumni representative, has

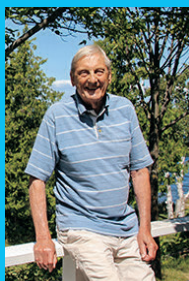
provided me with a new understanding of and respect for how the leaders of the college, conservatory, and Allen Memorial Art Museum put together a complicated jigsaw puzzle each year while at the same time juggling a combination of sharp and/or flaming objects and tempestuous personalities. The steering committee is asking hard questions and thinking deeply about the future. Every aspect of the life of the college is under the microscope. You'll be hearing more about the proposed plan soon. Please look carefully at the plan once it is distributed—Oberlin is our home, too, and the leaders of the process value your input.

Before I conclude, I want to pause a moment to say thank you. This is my last letter to you as president of the Oberlin Alumni Association, and I cannot leave without expressing my deep appreciation for the opportunity to be part of its leadership team. I've worked closely with a host of people in examining the leadership structure and devising a plan for reenergizing and finding new ways to engage alumni with the life of the college, and I have had the privilege of getting to know many alumni who have served on the executive board, the Alumni Council, and the new Alumni Leadership Council. I can't possibly list them all, but I can't leave without thanking particularly Danielle Young, executive director of the Alumni Association, and the amazing staff in the Office of Alumni Relations; my predecessor Jackie Hughes '76; past secretary Steve Watter '74; my successor, Lorri Olan '87; and new secretary/communications officer Andy Rowan '83, each of whom has inspired me with every conversation, pun, and work session. My wife, Debbie (Syracuse, Class of '75), who has been enormously patient with the time I've spent on Oberlin business in recent years and who has my undying appreciation for that, remarks repeatedly that she can't question the time spent because I come home from each weekend energized and awed by the interactions I've had, the dedication of the alumni to this institution, and the depth of thought and the delightful social connection that are a part of each meeting. I am, to be sure, a lucky beast on many levels, and I thank you all for giving me the privilege of serving in this capacity.

CHUCK SPITULNIK '73
President, Oberlin Alumni Association



A Gift That Endures



Robert Horst '53; O&ST '57

“More than any other experience I have had, my years at Oberlin College affected and shaped my life profoundly. I met my wife, Lorraine Bevan Horst '54 there and we were married while students and have enjoyed 62 years of married life together. At Oberlin, I was challenged to think critically and creatively, was exposed to ideas and concepts that broadened my mind and opened my life exponentially, and encountered the knowledge and values that provided the basis for my life's work.”

“Because of all Oberlin has given me, my wife and I have decided to give back, and can do so through a gift of real estate. The proceeds from the sale of our cottage will be used to fund and endow continuing scholarships to honor two men at Oberlin who had a profound impact on my life – William (Bill) H. Seaman, former director of admissions, and Guy Throner, professor of physical education and baseball coach. I attended Oberlin on a four year full tuition scholarship given in memory and honor of Bill Seaman, and Guy Throner provided guidance and support to me as an athlete and as a newly-wed student.

It is my hope that other alumni will recall Bill Seaman and Coach Throner fondly and they will join me in

honoring their contributions at Oberlin by making their gifts to this scholarship as well.”

Real estate is a powerful asset that can be put to work for you, for your loved ones and for Oberlin College. A gift of real estate can provide you with a sizable charitable tax deduction, can help you to avoid capital gain taxes, and can reduce your taxable estate. Oberlin can also reduce the burden of work you take on by providing assistance in the sale of your real estate if you wish.

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Losses

1940

Dr. James A. Russell Jr.'s career in education administration included 10 years as president of Saint Paul's College in Lawrenceville, Va.—a historically black institution founded by his own grandfather. During his tenure at Saint Paul's, Dr. Russell upgraded the faculty, coordinated a retirement program for employees, and constructed multiple buildings. Prior to taking the helm, he taught at Saint Paul's and at Hampton University, where he organized the department of electronics engineering technology and later became dean of technology. Upon retiring, Dr. Russell was appointed to the faculty of West Virginia State University. He earned bachelor's and master's degrees at Bradley University and a doctorate in education at the University of Maryland. Outspoken against racism throughout his life, Dr. Russell served as chair of the Commission to End Racism of the Episcopal Diocese of West Virginia. He was preceded in death by his wife of 68 years, Lottie W. Russell. His father, Dr. J. Alvin Russell, was a 1910 graduate of Oberlin.

1943

William R. Diehl enjoyed a long career as a singer in New York City, with roles in a succession of major Broadway debuts, including *South Pacific*, *The King and I*, and *My Fair Lady*. He also worked on television shows and sang solo parts in Sigmund Romberg's recordings of *La Traviata* and *Othello*. He enjoyed an even more rarified Broadway distinction: decades ago, when major shows fielded softball teams that competed on Thursday afternoons in Central Park, Mr. Diehl once struck out Paul Newman, Peter Falk, and Walter Matthau in the same afternoon and was named the season's MVP. He served in the U.S. Army in WWII, after which he completed a graduate degree at the Juilliard School. He earned a master's degree in teaching at Columbia University and became choral director in a local school district and a lecturer at Hofstra University. Mr. Diehl died March 17, 2014. He is survived by his wife of 55 years, Joan; four children; a granddaughter; and two great-grandchildren. ■ **Elizabeth Carpenter Lindsay** taught English and humanities for several decades at Marshall High School in Oregon. After starting her career at *Life*

magazine in New York, she married Dennis Lindsay and moved to Portland. She earned a master's degree in teaching at Reed College and enjoyed numerous volunteer efforts throughout her life, from aiding relief efforts in the wake of a major flood to supporting a local theater troupe. Ms. Lindsay died February 8, 2015. She leaves four children, four grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren.

1944

Catherine Adams Church carried fond memories of Oberlin throughout her life and enjoyed sharing stories of her college days with loved ones. Ms. Church died March 22, 2015. ■ **Barbara D. Hawthorne** taught piano for many years near her hometown of Lebanon, N.H. She worked as a cryptologist during WWII and later worked in a wide range of jobs, including the meteorology department at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and at a ranch in Wyoming. Ms. Hawthorne died January 27, 2015, and is survived by a daughter. She was preceded in death by a son. ■ A soprano who studied voice in England with Margaret Ritchie, **Ruth E. Whitney** earned a master's degree in music history and literature from the Crane School of Music and served as organist and choir director for numerous churches in upstate New York. She lived for a time in Oxford, England, where she appeared as soloist in various productions, including a staging of *Amahl and the Night Visitors* in which her sons shared the lead role. Ms. Whitney died March 9, 2015, leaving her husband, Byron Whitney, as well as two sons, a daughter, seven grandchildren, and five great-grandchildren.

1945

Dr. Janet Allison Taylor Spence became the first female member of the psychology faculty at Northwestern University and one of the first women in any discipline to earn tenure there. She married Kenneth W. Spence and both accepted positions in the psychology department at the University of Texas, where she remained until her retirement in 1997. Dr. Spence conducted influential research on the relationship between personality factors and cognitive performance, as well as studies that challenged conventional theories on the core

differences between male and female personalities. She edited numerous scientific journals and enjoyed various leadership roles, including stints as president of the American Psychological Association and the Association for Psychological Science. Among many honors, she was recognized by the National Academy of Sciences and elected to the National Academy of Arts and Sciences. She studied psychology at the graduate level at Yale and the University of Iowa, where she earned a PhD. Dr. Spence died March 16, 2015, preceded in death by her husband.

1946

Even at age 92, **Robert Calvert Jr.** proudly displayed two stickers in his car window: one honoring the 4th Armored Division, with which he fought in the Battle of the Bulge; the other an Oberlin sticker, a tribute to his wonderful memories as a student there. Mr. Calvert died June 11, 2015. He was preceded in death by his wife, Janice Mills '46, next to whom he is buried at Arlington National Cemetery. ■ A lifelong champion of equal rights, **Anne Higgins Nelson** worked for the Cornell University School of Industrial and Labor Relations, a position she began after raising four children with her husband, Chuck. She was a leader in her local PTA and active with the League of Women Voters for many years. Ms. Nelson died May 18, 2015, leaving her husband of 69 years, three sons, a daughter, 11 grandchildren, and 19 great-grandchildren.

1950

Dr. David Kaplan cofounded the music department at the University of Saskatchewan and taught there from 1964 to 1982. He was well known in Saskatoon music circles, serving as conductor of the city's symphony orchestra and founder of the Saskatoon Klezmer Band. He was honored with the Order of Canada, the Queen's Jubilee Gold Medal, and the Saskatchewan Order of Merit. Mr. Kaplan served in the U.S. Army during WWII and earned a bachelor's degree in music from Roosevelt University, a master of music at Oberlin, and a PhD in music from Indiana University. In addition to his wide-ranging music career, he was a cocreator of Saskatoon's Festival of Faith. He researched

and collected musical instruments from around the world, more than 100 of which now make up the Kaplan Collection at the University of Saskatchewan. Dr. Kaplan died April 6, 2015, leaving his wife, Susanne Micheaux Kaplan; two sons; a daughter; five grandchildren; a great-granddaughter; and two stepchildren. ■ **Patricia Mott Ross** turned a simple role as a Girl Scout volunteer for her three daughters into 52 years of leadership with the organization. She revived the Girl Scout Drum and Bugle Corps in her hometown of Lexington, Mass., chaired the Historical Committee for the Patriots' Trail Girl Scout Council, served on the national committee of Girl Scout Historians, and created the Girl Scout Museum at Cedar Hill in Massachusetts, which she curated from 1987 until her death on April 13, 2015. Ms. Ross was predeceased by her husband, Douglas T. Ross. She is survived by her three daughters, three grandchildren, and one great-grandson. ■ **Bruce Waterhouse Sr.** held several patents for his work as chemistry manager for a major international wire company. He died April 15, 2015, leaving his wife of 62 years, **Mary Jane Bell '52**; five children; and 10 grandchildren.

1951

A music major at Oberlin, **Roald Buhler** became the lead developer of the P-STAT statistical software program after retiring from his career with Princeton University. Initially a consultant, he accepted a staff position at Princeton in 1963 and stayed until 1979—a stint that included a role as director of the university's computer center during a period of ever-increasing reliance on technology. He developed P-STAT with his wife, **Shirrell de Leeuw Buhler '51**, after his Princeton years. Mr. Buhler died November 17, 2013. He is survived by four children and two grandchildren. His wife of 62 years died in 2015 (see below).

■ **Shirrell de Leeuw Buhler** was a founding partner of the P-STAT statistical software program, along with her husband and business partner, **Roald Buhler '51**, whom she met at Oberlin. She worked with computers alongside her husband for many years at Princeton University. In 1979, Mr. and Ms. Buhler transitioned from academia to commercial software development, incorporating as P-STAT Inc. She was the

primary author of the P-STAT manuals and training documentation. Together they traveled the world, making presentations and collaborating on government and private sector projects. Ms. Buhler died February 26, 2015, following the death of her husband in 2013. She is survived by four children and two grandchildren. ■ Economist and author **Dr. Robert Emery** was a member of the Federal Reserve System's Division of International Finance for 36 years. During that period, he also wrote four books on Asian finance, followed by a fifth in 2001, after his retirement. He served for 28 years as an adjunct professor of finance at Southeastern University and consulted for the World Bank after retiring. Dr. Emery served as a cadet-midshipman in the United States Merchant Marine Cadet Corps and followed his Oberlin education with a master's degree and doctorate in economics from the University of Michigan, in addition to a Fulbright research project in Burma. He died May 13, 2015, leaving **Phyllis Swanson Emery**, his wife of 57 years; three children; and five grandchildren.

1955

Dorothy Jon Zehrung Lewis dedicated a 38-year career to music education in the Lakewood Public Schools near Cleveland, in addition to leading a rich life in music away from the classroom, performing for churches, nursing homes, and other groups throughout her life. Ms. Lewis died March 4, 2015. She was preceded in death by her husband, **Thomas Lewis '56**, whom she met at Oberlin; she leaves two children.

1966

Dr. Louise Hantman Lindner Sunfeather Diamond helped create eight organizations dedicated to peaceful living, including the Institute for Multi-Track Diplomacy in Washington, D.C., and the Sunray Meditation Society and the Peace Company, both in Vermont. She traveled to more than 20 countries to share strategies on peace-building and nonviolent conflict resolution—often in active war zones—and she met multiple times with the Dalai Lama. Ms. Diamond earned additional degrees at the University of Michigan and Union Institute. She died May 20, 2015, leaving a daughter and three grandchildren.

1967

Myron Lowell Peyton earned an Master of Fine Arts degree from Yale University and taught in Boston, Phoenix, and at the Chicago Art Institute. He traveled extensively in Europe and the U.S. Mr. Peyton died April 2, 2015, leaving many loved ones.

1970

After graduating from the conservatory, **Terry Van Nelson** earned a Master of Music degree in organ performance and music literature from the University of Oregon in 1973, after which he made Portland his home. His lifelong love of music began with piano lessons at age 10, and for nearly 20 years he was an organist at the Madeleine Church in Portland. He also played piano for ballet classes and taught piano and organ privately. Mr. Van Nelson died February 16, 2015.

1974

Bruce Raymond Patzer picked up drumsticks at a young age, setting himself on a path as a standout percussionist who could play any instrument in an orchestra. He pursued studies at Knox College in addition to Oberlin. He became a band director in Newark, Ill. and worked as a graphic artist for R.R. Donnelly. Throughout his life, he enjoyed playing with friends in various rock bands and teaching young drummers, with help from various instructional books he wrote and published. Mr. Patzer died January 31, 2015. He is survived by his wife, Cyndee; a son; and daughter.

1986

Roberta Mary Perrow died October 10, 2014. She is remembered fondly for her sense of humor and her deep caring for others.

1999

Max Kosersky Robbin studied film at New York University, interned at the film company Good Machine, and worked at the International Center for Photography, where he developed into an accomplished photographer of nature. He loved to travel, cook, read, and explore his hometown of New York City, though the congenital heart malformation he was born with sent him to the Columbia University Medical Center as a child for two open-heart surgeries. He died November 14, 2006, at a time when he was applying to film schools.

“You can tell what music I was listening to that day or what books I was reading. It was just jokes to myself that no one would ever see—and it was a way of keeping myself sane—but I guess they ended up being seen.”

Michael Tritter '91, on the inside jokes he embedded in the source code of the beloved, groundbreaking (and still accessible and intact) website for the movie *Space Jam*, in *Rolling Stone* magazine.

“What’s really fun as the villain is working to get the audience to hate you.”

Actor Cory Stoll '98, who plays Yellowjacket in *Ant-Man*, in a cover story in *Backstage* magazine.

“There are certain things that you can’t do in the world and not seem like a crazy person. But in the dance studio, we call that improvisation.”

Ann Cooper Albright, Oberlin College professor of dance and chair of the dance department.

“Take naps. Preschool and college are the only times when napping is socially acceptable.”

One of seven pieces of advice for new students (originally for her sister) from Justine Goode '16, in the *New York Times* “Education Life” section.

“I did not plan on becoming a college president. I did not grow up dreaming of a life filled with faculty senates, football, and bow ties. I owe my current position as the president of Paul Quinn College less to design than to the confluence of a series of seemingly random events, not the least of which was the fact that I saw potential in a role few others found desirable.”

Michael J. Sorrell '88, president of Paul Quinn College, in *Insider Higher Ed*.

“Oberlin, that friend of the oppressed; Oberlin, my dear alma mater, whose name will always be loved and whose praise will ever be sung as the first college in the country which was just, broad, and benevolent enough to open its doors to negroes and to women on an equal footing with men.”

Mary Church Terrell, Class of 1884, in an 1898 address before the National American Woman Suffrage Association (see Around Tappan Square in this issue for information on a symposium about the pioneering civil rights and suffrage activist).

“When people are more inspired by a guy who looks like the about-to-retire dean of students at Oberlin, you’ve got to start asking what the hell’s going on.”

The Nightly Show host Larry Wilmore, about the surge in polls by Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders over Hillary Clinton.

“Thanks to Larry Wilmore for pointing out what I have always thought was a freakish likeness between me and Bernie Sanders... lol. I’m not sure if people will find this reassuring or disappointing, but I’m not retiring.”

Eric Estes, vice president and dean of students at Oberlin, on Facebook. To see a picture of Estes, turn to this magazine’s Thought Process section.

On Friday, June 26, Kendal at Oberlin was celebrating anniversaries of couples marking decades together. One of the couples had special reason to be joyful – on their 40th anniversary together, Robert Taylor and Ted Nowick were also celebrating the Supreme Court's ruling in favor of same-sex marriage nationwide. And the entire Kendal community celebrated with them. What a fabulous day! Let's all celebrate this historic occasion.

"To stand tall and free, with integrity in one's living and loving is a great joy. On the day of the Supreme Court decision another resident put up the pride flag, and we stood proudly before it as married Americans, celebrating that love is love, including ours."

– Ardith Hayes



Photograph by Richard Baznik

Married couples celebrate the Supreme Court ruling on July 26, 2015 – Ruth Ann Clark and Ardith Hayes, along with Robert Taylor and Ted Nowick

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