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Mixed media
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On the Front Cover: “Friendship is important in our community. People get along. We’re buddies.” Community photography, Amipinga Group, Malawi.
Editor’s Notebook

Andrew C. Holman

In May 1894, Bridgewater Normal School student and Acadia College graduate Frederick Monod Shaw opened a heated debate by publishing a letter in his alma mater’s alumni journal, The Acadia Athenaeum. His six-page note at once praised the methods of teaching at his new, American school and indicted those of his old, Canadian one. At the center of pedagogy at BNS, he gushed, was object study, a practical method of teaching in all branches of learning, a system first articulated by Normal’s renowned principal, Albert Gardner Boyden (1827-1915). “Object study is everywhere applied … Geology and Botany are taught almost exclusively from the student’s own study of specimens … History is pursued along the same lines of investigation … pictures of architecture, maps and actual relics are the objects of study for facts … In chemistry … every student has his ‘chem. kit’.” The goal was to have students arrive at the laws governing the physical and human worlds by their own “original thinking.” For Shaw, this hands-on approach surpassed Acadia professors’ preferences for the theoretical and the rote: “high literary culture, higher philosophy, and beautiful thoughts.”

Fred Shaw’s admonishments were hardly well received among his colleagues and former teachers in Nova Scotia, and they prompted several responses. Acadia geology students wrote a tart rejoinder in the Athenaeum’s June issue, claiming that a combination of object study and theoretical learning was the proper method in their field. An editorialist wondered, wryly, how it could be that Mr. Shaw had gotten on so well at Bridgewater given that his Acadia preparation had allegedly been so poor. And Shaw’s charges resonated so loudly that much of Acadia professor D.H. Higgins’ October 1894 convocation speech was given over to defending traditional pedagogy: “We should understand the nature of the tools we use and the consequences that may result from any modification of the methods of our work … [Our aim remains] to acquaint students with the … great thought of the greatest thinkers … in every department of study.”

It’s tempting to look back at the “Shaw Affair” as nothing more than a mildly humorous intercampus spat. All of these combatants have gone on to their reward and six score years have passed. But if we don’t give in to the condescension of posterity (to borrow Edward Thompson’s phrase), it’s possible to see in it something of our own day and our current challenge. University teaching is not less fraught today; it is more. Never before have the ways we teach been so often and publicly discussed and debated. We have become preoccupied with pedagogical innovation; the pages of the Chronicle of Higher Education and University Affairs, and editorial writing in the nation’s largest dailies confirm it. In the past twenty years we have been run over by a train of novelties, a vaudeville of pedagogical improvements – laptop requirements, learning communities, clicker technology, dynamic assessment, MOOCs, mindful teaching, the flipped classroom, and others. And more will come, driven in
part, disconcertingly, by an industry of experts and accreditationists who benefit professionally and financially from cultivating a belief that what we do now in the classroom is not really good enough. We welcome what’s new, we denigrate the old. Sage on the stage? Dead, we’re told, and worse — the university lecture, one curious New York Times editorial (12 September 2015) declared, is biased against female, minority, low-income and first-generation students. That’s a very heavy charge.

Professors who have lived through this whirlwind might be forgiven for exhibiting symptoms of what industry and educational organization analysts call “innovation fatigue.” These are the words of a university teacher who has been at it now for a quarter of a century, most of that at BSU, and has seen enough merit in at least some of the pedagogical innovations in that time to have picked the flowers of those that appealed most. I still lecture and I still make my students read lots and write properly. But I spend as much time using small-group work and student presentations, electronic means of expression and encounter, peer evaluation and digital research. All of that seems trifling and the actions of someone who has consistently been well behind the vanguard of progressive change.

The rhetoric of today’s pedagogical innovation, like Shaw’s, has an unfortunate underlying tone. University teachers today who are aware of what is going on in their profession are told, repeatedly and in myriad ways, that though they may work from “sun ’til sun,” their work is never done. To be a good university teacher is to be constantly dissatisfied with his results, to want more and to be open to try all new things. The imperative for change demands it. And yet many of the best professors that I know, at BSU and at other schools, are the best because they have mastered of the old, timeless tenets of good university teaching: sound command of and engagement with subject material, clarity and felicity of expression, genuine commitment to students’ interests and grasp, pride in their craft and a willingness to work hard at it.

After a brilliant start to a promising career as a school principal, first in Paterson, New Jersey and later in Denver, Colorado, BNS graduate Fred Shaw died a lamentably early death from tuberculosis in 1900. Had he lived longer, he might have seen the folly of his hope that “sweeping reforms” would one day brush away the old teaching methods and replace them with the pedagogically new. That didn’t happen, and the university teaching today remains an effective amalgam, both cloister and workshop. Would that it stays that way.
Picturing Development in Malawi
Norma J. Anderson

The photograph on the cover of this issue of Bridgewater Review shows two men seated on a verandah, hands clasped, with a child seated in front of them. All three people are looking at the camera, engaged with the person taking the image. In discussing why they took the picture, the photographers said, “Friendship is … important in our community. We get along. We’re buddies.”

When Americans see pictures of poor people in Africa, we usually see them depicted as objects of pity or objects of cultural interest, not as thoughtful individuals. All photographs in this article were taken by residents of a village in central Malawi, part of a project aimed not only at understanding participants’ ideas about their community’s needs and things that matter to them but at conceptualizing a way that outsiders might better “hear” poor people telling their own stories, with their own voices. As such, the pictures are deliberate and self-aware. They help us visualize a place and lives that are unfamiliar, but they can do more than that: pairing the shots with people’s reasons for taking them can shift our perspectives by contrasting our views of the images with those of the photographers.

Sociologists focus on taken-for-granted understandings of the world around us, studying not only what other people believe but examining our own beliefs simultaneously. Additionally, if we are lucky, we can transform discipline-specific learning and theories into practical action. Slowly, this is happening with my work. Fifteen years ago, soon after graduating from college, I traveled to Malawi for a year and a half, supported by a Fulbright fellowship. My research focused on the socioeconomic effects of tobacco-growing clubs on small-scale women farmers. But a funny thing sometimes happens during research: while we set off to learn about one thing, we encounter unexpected lessons that may seem of secondary importance but which, in retrospect, often resonate the longest. This was my experience.

Armed only with a greedy desire to learn and a will to take action against global inequalities, I threw myself into studying Chichewa, a local language, and getting to know the lay of the land, participating in varied social situations and meeting as many people as possible. After living in Malawi only a few months, the Malawi government announced that it would raise rents in the apartment complex where I lived by 250%! This enormous hike was unaffordable for most Malawian residents even though a majority had formal employment. (With my Fulbright funding, I would be just fine). Tenants organized community meetings to protest the costs and, eager to see what they would do, I attended several meetings with a Malawian friend of mine who also lived there. Our neighbors, after deliberating various potential actions, decided to create a petition, indicating both an unwillingness and inability to pay the new rents. But while everyone agreed on this tactic, they could not agree on where to send it. Many were nervous about seeming “rude” should it be delivered to the wrong government official, someone ranking too high or too low.

What I was witnessing as I listened to the group’s hesitancy to deliver this politely worded petition was a moment in Malawi’s democratic transition. Every person there that day had grown up during the country’s 30-year dictatorship, during which speech was censored and individual freedoms limited. In 2000, Malawi had been a multi-party democracy for only six years. People’s nervousness was totally reasonable and, in the end, they did not send the petition. How long would it take before that fear of government reprisal lessened? What other factors inhibited or encouraged political action and social change on a local scale? And what effects might outsiders have on social action? These questions have formed central themes in my research ever since.

Since 1994 there has been no shortage of foreign intervention in Malawi in the shape of development assistance and direct foreign aid. The country is poor: based on Gross Domestic Product (GDP), the World Bank currently lists
“They want us to do what they want, not what the people want on the ground ... Most donors take advantage of our vulnerability to dictate what we are going to do.”

Malawi as the poorest in the world. HIV prevalence remains above ten percent, maternal mortality is greater than 500 per 100,000 live births (the rate is 28 in the United States), and its total fertility rate is about 5.4 (data.worldbank.org). Malawi’s population is growing quickly, its natural environment is suffering, and hunger, for many of its 14 million inhabitants, is an annual concern.

Over the last decade and a half, I have conducted 70 interviews with Malawians working in civil society organizations [CSOs]—non-governmental and parastatal groups, foundations, and charities striving to develop the country and improve people’s living standards. My goals were to investigate how much influence Malawians have on development agendas in their own country as well as some of the unintended consequences of development work there. My findings agree with the work of numerous scholars: development agendas in poor countries are often dictated outside the country. They change rapidly and with each successive agenda, CSOs must shift their targets and missions to accommodate the changes: CSOs are almost entirely dependent on foreign funding for their continued existence. The Malawi government, too, must be mindful of the desires of donors: about 40% of the national budget is provided by overseas governments. The internalized understandings resulting from these donor/recipient relationships are troubling.

Over the course of three separate research trips, respondents’ perceptions of donors’ “main” interests changed. HIV/AIDS was the primary focus in 2008, climate change had become paramount in 2010, and in 2014 there was no consensus. But while perceived

Amabanja group: “The chief was telling the people to go and mold bricks and this is people in action now. The community, there are people who are making paste with water; others are molding bricks; others are bringing in water. It’s like working hand in hand to mold the bricks.”
development agendas shifted over time, respondents were consistent in leveling two concerns: first, that power was skewed, privileging donors’ wishes over Malawian needs and, second, that there was need for stronger local leadership. Respondents made it clear that they felt no true partnership existed between CSOs and foreign funders. One said, “That’s [a] big problem— the attitude of most donors. They would want to see us dance to their tunes. They want us to do what they want, not what the people want on the ground ... Most donors take advantage of our vulnerability to dictate what we are going to do.”

Many respondents were members of the socioeconomic elite in Malawi; many had college degrees, and some had graduate degrees. Yet they felt their voices went unheard and were frustrated by that. One woman who had worked in the CSO sector more than a decade said, “I don’t believe in democracy. What has democracy brought to this country? ... Ask around, people will say we were much better under Banda [Hastings Banda, President, 1964–1994].” A social activist, well known and outspoken for decades, said, “Not being a leader, what can you do? You… have no power to change those things. Leaders have to decide.”

Rereading these interviews reveals a dismaying reality. Today, participants no longer worry about appearing “rude,” but do continue to express feelings of powerlessness toward both their own government and outsiders who, ironically, seek to make Malawi a more democratic, self-sustaining nation. These elites are actively working for improvement in their communities but feel helpless. This fact is particularly disheartening because many respondents see themselves and their organizations acting as “voices for the voiceless”—the poor people whom CSOs are designed to help. And if elites feel powerless and unable to create meaningful programming for social change, do non-elites, the intended beneficiaries of outside interventions, feel even less agency in shaping their own community development?

In Malawi, it is striking how rarely poor people seem to be taken into account in local development projects. That poor people are “voiceless” is a ludicrous statement. Their voices are more than adequate; it is likely our willingness to listen that is lacking. But how can we hear better? And can I use my research to pursue methods that enable more effective listening, leading, ideally, to better outcomes for development projects? Thanks to a grant from BSU’s Center for the Advancement of Research and Scholarship, I returned to

And their photos are stunning—they make powerful statements about who people are and what they believe they need.
Malawi in the summer of 2015 to work with villagers I have known since 2000. I asked if they would talk about what they have observed during their own experiences with development as well as what they want the next time some well-meaning outsider comes offering to do a project. They agreed.

Over the course of a month and a half, five groups totaling about 50 villagers met with me to consider development projects that had taken place in their community, what worked or did not, what roles they played, and what they would like to do in the future. The groups were suggested by the chief and we agreed on five categories in which to organize people, hoping to get varied social understandings: the Amfumu group, consisting of the chief and elders; the Amapinga group, made up of people who identified as very religious; the Amabanja, a group of people in traditional families; the singles group, comprised of divorced or widowed women; and a group of youth, who worked directly with the Amfumu group.

Our talks indicated that most projects were generated by outsiders including religious or business groups, CSOs, and the Malawi government but a few, like building a new church, originated within the village itself. Not surprisingly, no one had complaints about the church building: they built it, it is in use. Regarding other projects, people felt that outside groups had made promises they either failed to keep or simply abandoned. As an example, the villagers have made tens of thousands of bricks for various construction projects (in development, it is believed that there will be greater project “sustainability” if local people contribute to it. Consequently, for projects such as school buildings or latrines, villagers were tasked with crafting bricks). While a school block was constructed, villagers had understood that more building would take place but the implementers did not return. Other
projects, such as a water well, have broken and local people cannot repair them: there is now only one functioning well for the village.

At the end of our meetings and discussions, participants used cameras I brought to take pictures of their community. They photographed things that mattered to them, development projects that had happened or needed to happen, and anything else they felt like capturing. The results of this pilot project were enlightening for me and, I hope, for the people who participated. And their photos are stunning—they make powerful statements about who people are and what they believe they need. The photos accompanying this article are a small sample of the many pictures taken by villagers who agreed to participate. The captions are quotes from interviews in which they explained their pictures.

So what do they say? There was a tendency for the villagers who participated in the pilot study to rue the lack of adequate assistance from the outside and lay blame for failed projects at the feet of others (much as CSOs lay blame at the feet of donors, government, and villagers, who are presumed to be waiting for handouts). But people also noted that the projects they started and most wanted were the projects that had had the best results, projects such as the church and latrines. They are eager to put in effort when the outcomes not only benefit them but match their own goals. And they have clear ideas for what they want. Some projects they suggested are enormous, like the construction of a clinic, with the attendant equipment, drug stocks, and staff. Others are smaller and more immediately feasible, like the construction of a sturdy bridge over a deep ravine that people must cross to get to school and the closest health facility.

At our final meeting, I told participants that I would like to return and work with them to design a plan for a project they choose, using their photography and stories to bring in partners to support their vision and needs. They were enthusiastic for the possibility. I am too, because even if projects are small, a real partnership, in which all sides are actively engaged, might foster greater autonomy and build villagers’ abilities to direct more of their own projects in the future. Outside help can be incredibly beneficial: villagers have little capital, either financial or social. Outsiders can bring both in the form of money and connections to people who can accomplish tasks (engineers to guide proper bridge construction, for example). But bringing those together in a way that is respectful of villagers’ pre-existing knowledge, opinions, and needs, as well as letting them lead, is vital. Listening is essential, and giving people a chance to use pictures to frame their own stories might be one way to listen more closely. Heeding the voices and the knowledge of poor people as they strive to achieve their goals seems a genuinely just and democratic aim.

We can rarely predict where research will take us. A winding road led me to this point, where I can combine sociological theory with purpose, working with others for practical results. The study of history and economics, religion and science, statistics and visual communication have merged in ways I never anticipated and I’m excited to see what happens next.

Norma J. Anderson is Assistant Professor in the Department of Sociology
Lessons from the First Universities

J.R. Webb

Commemorative anniversaries, whatever the year, lead to reflections on institutional origins. And while Bridgewater’s university status is of recent vintage, we nonetheless share deep connections with the first universities, a new type of institution that began cropping up in parts of Europe at the end of the twelfth century. By considering the broad strokes of their origins, their structure, and their pedagogical practices, we might better appreciate those fundamental institutional constants still with us today as well as some of the great changes that have occurred in the intervening centuries.

The common terminology between the first universities and their current iterations offers a good starting point. Terms such as lecture and lesson (which come from the same root), study, examination, matriculate, discipline, liberal arts, faculty, scholar, license, bachelor, master, doctor, professor (these last three titles were interchangeable), dean, chancellor, rector, proctor, regent, bursar, college, and university, were all used with some consistency in the medieval university, though a few of these terms have changed their meanings significantly.

Bridgewater can trace its origins precisely to 1840, but the same sort of precision is lacking for the earliest universities at Bologna, Paris, and Oxford. None of these original universities was established with a formal charter: in this respect, they differ from the institutions that came later, including all those in North America. Instead, the first universities grew and developed organically over the course of the twelfth century, from the coalescence of an initially disjointed collection of scholars. The first “official” sources that inform us about university affairs stem from crises beginning to recognize scholars as a distinct legal body, as a corporation (in medieval terms, a guild). The fact that all industry, from that of wealthy merchants to simple artisans, was also organized into guilds shows the decidedly urban nature of the first universities. The bucolic ideal of the American liberal arts campus lay in the distant future; the first universities developed in places of dense population and brisk exchange.

Our term for an institution of higher learning did not originally connote education: universitas (lit. the totality) was merely the standard terminology for guilds, whether it was the “totality of merchants” (universitas mercatorum) or the “totality of masters and scholars” (universitas magistrorum et scholarum). The nature of the scholastic guilds was not uniform throughout Europe: the two oldest universities – Bologna and Paris – adopted different structures. At Bologna, which emerged from the city’s many law schools in the twelfth century, the group that eventually incorporated into a guild was the students, who, in contrast to the professors, were not Bolognese. These students organized for legal protection and fair treatment from the town and their teachers (whom they often subjected to rigorous demands for punctuality and efficiency). At Paris, the professors (i.e. the masters) were the ones to incorporate; for better or worse, most subsequent universities would adopt this structure.

Lessons from the First Universities grew and developed organically over the course of the twelfth century, from the coalescence of an initially disjointed collection of scholars.
By the thirteenth century, these new institutions of learning were referring to themselves as *studia generalia* — places of general study. They were “general” in the sense that they accepted students from all over Europe, at least those parts where Latin was the intellectual language. (Plenty of “national” divisions awaited students upon their arrival.) The universities offered instruction in the liberal arts (reckoned at seven in the medieval curriculum, the most important subject being, without question, logic) as well as in at least one of the higher faculties of law, medicine, and theology.

Urban guilds were controlled by their full members. Guild masters set the prices and standards for products, the wages for laborers in the industry, and, most importantly, controlled entry into their ranks. A typical craft guild was a three-tiered structure, with adolescent apprentices offering their labor in exchange for learning a trade, older day laborers earning a wage and, at the top, shop-owning masters.

At the university, the craft in question was not knowledge itself but specifically its conveyance; therefore, university degrees signifying various levels of entry into the guild all related to the practice, to the occupation, of teaching. The young student entered as a pure apprentice with low status; only after several years of successful study and passing an exam did he become a “bachelor” (*baccalaureus*), which entitled him to undertake some minor teaching responsibilities. After a few more years, he could be considered for the teaching license (*licentia docendi*) and, if successful, was then eligible to “incept”; that is, to join the ranks of the masters and begin to deliver standard lectures in the curriculum (this inception explains why we still refer to the attainment of a university degree as a beginning or “commencement”). All students seeking to study in one of the higher faculties needed to demonstrate mastery of the liberal arts. A similar set of degrees awaited them in law, medicine, and theology.

Fewer went through the steps to become masters. That must have been because the degrees, while considered a source of social prestige, were only of use to those who stayed within the university. For example, the relatively large number of students who became masters in the faculty of arts did so only in order to enter a higher faculty.

Unlike today, there were no positions, either in the church or in the developing royal bureaucracies, that required a university degree. These employers were more interested in skills than credentials. Several years of study at a university — degree or no degree — brought with them the expectation of competence in Latin and training in the principles of dialectic. The majority of participants in the medieval university were temporary members of the community; they neither sought nor received full membership into the guild. To have studied for a time at a place such as Paris was often enough to further one’s career.

Then, as now, advanced study in law or medicine opened doors to high positions, and especially in the case of law, there was a direct link between university training and royal administration. It is perhaps for this reason that the lifelong university masters, typically those in the faculty of theology, often derided the other higher faculties as the “lucrative sciences” — corruptions of an idealized pursuit of truth.

What did this university education look like at a practical level and what measures were in place to train teachers? Lectures (*lectiones*; readings) formed...
the core of the university experience and were based on the reading of authoritative texts. In the thirteenth-century faculty of arts, the syllabus was dominated by Aristotle, known simply as “the philosopher,” whose corpus had been expanding greatly since the twelfth century thanks to an influx of new translations, some from the original Greek and some via Arabic. The ordinary lecture, in which a master read from a book in the standard curriculum, was not a simple verbatim reading. These dense texts needed to be expounded on and explained, and individual masters developed various techniques for doing so. In cases where masters isolated specific questions arising from a text, they were free to draw from other authorities and the rules of reason to arrive at conclusions. In these quaestiones, masters employed the essential scholastic method of putting forth a proposition and then supporting and challenging it with a list of authorities pro and contra. This classroom method led to the second fundamental practice in the universities, the disputation.

In essence, what was being taught in every discipline was the application of the principles of logic either to determine true statements from false ones, or to reconcile seeming contradictions through subtler definitions. Formal disputations at regular intervals throughout the year were a staple of the medieval university. Here, students engaged in active structured debate, his more important role was to issue the determinatio — his own answer, either affirming or rejecting all or parts of the proposition. At certain points in the year, universities held special public disputations called de quolibet (lit. about whatever). In these academic free-for-alls, any member of the audience was permitted to engage the presiding master by putting forth propositions or arguments.

Since lectures and disputations formed the core of the academic experience, the performance of these skills marked the transition into the higher levels of guild membership. To become a baccalareus, the pupil “determined” (resolved a disputation) in a special procedure for that purpose. The final ceremony that created a master, the inception, included a disputation and an inaugural lecture as its main components (along with a large banquet at the newly minted master’s expense!). In this structure, there was no disconnect between research and teaching. The wealth of writings produced in the university setting were products of teaching, whether commentaries on authoritative texts, written quaestiones, or extensive compilations known as summae. Nor were medieval universities bereft of writings on educational theory. To single out only one of the most influential, the thirteenth-century treatise, On the training of scholars (De disciplina scholarium), survives in well over a hundred manuscripts. Despite its pseudonymous authorship by the sixth-century philosopher Boethius, it comes directly from a university milieu.

![Image of Pseudo-Boethius, De disciplina scholarium](https://example.com/boethius_image.jpg)

At its height in the late thirteenth century, the medieval university was considered the third pillar of authority alongside the church and the state.
Unlike today, there were no positions, either in the church or in the developing royal bureaucracies, that required a university degree.

and emphasizes the symbiotic relationship between learning and teaching. Its first chapters treat the beginnings of one’s studies, but the last focus on the preparation and duties of a master. One cannot know how to act as an authority figure in the classroom without first learning obedience in the same forum. The manual even offers advice for scholars of different temperament – what we might call learning styles – all couched in terms of humoral theory.

At its height in the late thirteenth century, the medieval university was considered the third pillar of authority alongside the church and the state. Popes, emperors, and kings all saw the benefits of universities as sources of knowledge and authority (not to mention skilled administrators). They hoped that by protecting the privileges of universities, these institutions would incline themselves favorably towards their protectors.

This elevated status of the university did not last. Already in the fourteenth century, the voice of critique expands beyond monastic circles claiming the vanity of all worldly knowledge. No better example can be found than the Italian Petrarch (†1374), who dismissed the inane logical exercises of scholastics seeking to determine the corporeal qualities of angels and the like. Renaissance humanists used the scholasticism of the university as a scapegoat for what was wrong with the intellectual life of their time. Their disdain for the intellectual development of the preceding centuries is what created the notion of a “middle age” between classical culture and its rebirth in the first place.

This view of the medieval university had resonance for a long time. It was carried to America, and held by an individual intimately tied to the origins of the Bridgewater Normal School. When in 1840 Horace Mann delivered a speech on *An Historical View of Education: Showing its Dignity and its Degradation*, his purpose was to rail against the educational practices of past societies. Throughout the speech, it becomes evident why he has failed to find any worthy theory of education in history: he viewed education not as an individual experience, but in relation to a population as a whole, the “common mass of mind” as he put it, whose education was deemed essential to the survival and functioning of the new democracy.

In contrast, medieval universities were not public in any real sense, beyond the principle that no worthy student should be refused an education on the basis of poverty. But neither the very poor nor the very wealthy comprised the university-educated in the Middle Ages. The majority of students were city dwellers in search of education for social mobility. Of course, we cannot forget that “student” here means male student, and the education of women – for which the normal school movement was fundamental – exposes perhaps the greatest contrast between the first universities and our own.

Before we dismiss the first universities as so far removed from higher education in the twenty-first century that they defy useful comparison, we might consider what has remained constant over the past eight centuries. The autonomy of the masters was central to the power of the first universities and remains an important part of our unionized faculty today. And as for teaching, how many of us would claim to employ some mixture of “lecture” (the direct conveying of authoritative information from teacher to student) and “discussion” (the fostering of questions and debate among the students) in our classrooms? This has been, essentially, the format of university education since its beginning.
More than Talent Alone*

Jakari Griffith and Colby King

Pittsburgh Pirates baseball player Andrew McCutchen is a fine center fielder. With a neatly trimmed beard, a fiercely competitive spirit, and an obsession with self-improvement, he has not only won the hearts of media and fans with his spectacular on-field performances, and his deep sense of humility and positive attitude, certainly the inevitable by-products of perseverance and hard work, inspire a profound sense of popular admiration. On all counts, McCutchen is no ordinary player.

Behind him stands baseball, a sport that evokes vivid memories of hot dogs and cotton candy. It is a sport where fans sit in the bleachers anticipating that their favorite player will slide across home plate to claim victory. It is also very much a story about young batters practicing in countless batting cages in American suburbs, ball games taking center stage on abandoned tennis courts in city centers, and little-league rivalries dividing town and country kids on the central plains. As these examples illustrate, baseball is a cornerstone of American cultural tradition. Among other things, that tradition has always promised that if you are talented and work hard, you will be rewarded with success.

As the American pastime, baseball is often used to illustrate the popular ideology of individualism, and outstanding players are held up as examples of how talent and hard work translates to success. While it is true that the skill levels of professional ball players exceed those of the general population, their stories obscure the fact that social networks, coaches, and financial resources, are just as often defining factors paving players’ paths to baseball stardom. In other words, talent can provide an athlete with much needed visibility in a crowded field of players, but how he gained the opportunity to showcase that talent in the first place is an even more basic precondition that sometimes goes ignored.

In a recent essay featured in The Players’ Tribune (“Left Out,” 13 February 2015), Andrew McCutchen uses his own life to illustrate the link between resources and player development and in doing so he challenges the traditional assumption that talent and hard work alone will lead to success. Among his reflections, he highlights how as a child simply being able to play organized baseball and having the equipment to do so was often a struggle for him, despite his nascent talent. McCutchen, who was born to unwed parents of little means in North Meade, Florida, acknowledges the cost and difficulties talented kids from poor families face as they hope to be discovered by scouts. McCutchen remembers that he had to choose between a new baseball bat and a video game system for Christmas. Pro scouts, he argues, overlook many talented players, because their families cannot afford to put them into high-visibility tournaments. “It’s not about the $100 bat. It’s about the $100-a-night motel room and the $30 gas money and the $300 tournament fee. There’s a huge financing gap to get a child to that next level where they might be seen.” McCutchen stated it plainly: “If you’re a poor kid with raw ability, it’s not enough.”

There is a valuable lesson here that goes well beyond baseball. Rigorous practice can convert any raw ability into something more orderly, predictable, and refined. However, this conversion process is not created equally. Being embedded in a valued network of social connections can significantly influence how raw ability is transformed into something of professional value. As Princeton sociologist Alejandro Portes writes: “social ties can bring about greater control over wayward
behavior and provide privileged access to resources; they can also restrict individual freedoms and bar outsiders from gaining access to the same resources” ([Annual Review of Sociology [1998]]).

We all rely on a variety of forms of capital (financial, social, and cultural) to help us make the most of our skills and opportunities. Social capital includes the resources and assets that are available to us through our social networks. Cultural capital includes education, style of speech and dress, and physical appearance, and may be thought of as any non-monetary asset in life. In our daily lives, social capital helps us learn new information and find opportunities. For example, perhaps a friend knows about a job opening at her company that otherwise would have been unknown. We use our cultural capital to know how to “fit in” in various social settings; even knowledge as ostensibly trivial as which fork to use for the first course at a fancy restaurant has cultural value.

Being without social capital is difficult, but so is having a lack of emotional resources necessary to cope with changing environmental demands. Resources such as hope, optimism, confidence, otherwise known as psychological capital, are critical for overcoming failure or setback. Yet, for an individual to draw on these resources, he must engage in developmental experiences that allow him to build these capacities in the first place. As McCutchen argues, these experiences are in short supply for those without a way to access them.

Like athletes, many of our students face the same challenges. Some are disadvantaged in that they lack the emotional maturity needed to “compete” effectively at higher levels. Seen from this view, low college-completion rates are not always the result of normal (and expected) attrition; not all students fail simply because they can’t make the grade. Research tells us that there is more at play here than academics alone. Students who feel isolated and detached from their homes and communities may drop out because they have no one to turn to discuss difficult situations and the pressures of adjusting to college life. Students must learn to tell themselves “I belong here,” even if, initially, it doesn’t feel that way.

These forms of capital help explain success and opportunities in many areas of life, well beyond sport. Baseball players need financial capital to join travel teams and play in tournaments where they will get noticed, the social capital to know which teams would give them the best exposure, the cultural capital to know how best to talk with scouts and recruiters, and the psychological capital to persist in their efforts. These forms of capital are just as crucial for college students as they are for baseball players. Though there is no single best predictor of a college student’s occupational and socioeconomic success, research shows that the higher a parent’s level of education, the greater the benefit to her children, a benefit that results from a widened scope of social interactions and

McCutchen stated it plainly: “If you’re a poor kid with raw ability, it’s not enough.”
Though there is no single best predictor of a college student’s occupational and socioeconomic success, research shows that the higher a parent’s level of education, the greater the benefit to her children, a benefit that results from a widened scope of social interactions and more economic opportunities (Davis-Kean, *Journal of Family Psychology* [2005]). Having social connections with family, friends, or mentors who have themselves traversed the college experience, can have a substantial, positive impact for a student.

Today, we have in America more first-generation students entering college than ever before. We could easily nod at these numbers and congratulate ourselves that these opportunities are growing. But that’s not enough, especially when we know that so many of them are navigating this experience without the inherited cultural capital of previous generations. How might we go about creating an enriching academic experience that improves the prospects of those who have a scarcity of these forms of capital? That’s a question for which there is no easy answer. But there is one thing we know for sure—a supportive learning environment that recognizes that scarcity and works to provide access to these forms of capital for all students offers the best chance for student success.

At its most basic level, McCutchen’s story reminds us how vital social support is to athletes, and to students’ success, as well. Most of all, it reminds us of a basic fact: none of us makes it on our own. It dispels the notion that professional success can be obtained by exercising talent alone, independent of related financial, social, and psychological resources. It also reminds us how easy it is to focus on the deeds of “high performers,” giving little attention to how external circumstances coalesce and form conditions that make an elevated performance possible. And it instructs us, as teachers, to resist attributing the failures of others to disposition or to personal defect. McCutchen’s example awakens us to those biases.

At Bridgewater State University we work to provide an extraordinarily supportive environment for first-generation college students, giving them opportunities to interact with professors whose stories sometimes resemble their own. One example is *Class Beyond the Classroom*, an on-campus group started by faculty, staff and students interested in sharing resources, stories, and support, with the aim of promoting the success of first-generation college students. At our meetings, group members sometimes share stories in panel-like sessions, helping weary students imagine the innumerable possibilities their education will afford, and doing so from a sympathetic perspective. Some members focus on improving the connections between students and university services, while others explore opportunity and resources gaps. The group represents just one of the many student success initiatives taking place across our campus. And the success of these programs continues to grow.

What we learn from the triumphs of baseball stars like McCutchen and the successes of our students is that in life, as in baseball, it is not just about having talent. It’s also about having the resources with which to make the most of that talent. Let us all work to ensure that these resources, these forms of capital, are more easily available to all students, so that we can all share in each other’s success.

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*An earlier version of this essay appeared on the Everyday Sociology Blog (2 March 2015).*
PHOTO ESSAY
Looking Backwards and Forwards: Works by Five Emeritus Art Faculty
Text by Stephen Smalley

Last spring, five BSU art professors emeritus displayed their artworks on campus, depicting their personal reminiscences of the Art Center, the university’s oldest building. The mixed media exhibition was held in Boyden Hall, the building that housed the art department in a basement location until January 1976, when the department was moved to the Art Center. Participating former faculty members were John Droege, Roger Dunn, Joan Hausrath, Dorothy Pulsifer and Stephen Smalley, long-serving colleagues in the art department. It is worth noting that the five emeriti cumulatively taught at Bridgewater State for 175 years, a fortuitous tally as the university celebrates its 175th anniversary. Highly instrumental in the early stages of planning for the renovation of the 1905 structure that became the Art Center was David Flynn, who served as the university’s Director of Development in the mid-1970s and remains a university and town icon.

The venerable 110-year-old building was originally constructed as a gymnasium serving both the institution and the community, later serving as a school library, followed by its use as office space for humanities faculty. In May 1976, after its first semester in the renovated building, the art department’s inaugural group of art majors graduated. The five emeriti share a joyous and cherished relationship with the building. To this day, stories of the building’s ghostly presences are recounted and its architectural heritage has been linked, perhaps faintly, to the influences of the renowned architect, Henry Hobson Richardson.

Presented on these pages are images from the exhibition as well as additional representational work from the five emeriti who continue to be active in the studio and in the profession.

From his Plymouth home studio, **John Droege** is mightily involved with technical printing processes in photography and continues to mentor exhibiting photographers. **Roger Dunn** has recently relocated to Annapolis, in his home state of Maryland, and is at work enthusiastically in his home studio. Roger continues to advise and promote established artists. **Joan Hausrath** continues her exploration of non-toxic printmaking techniques from her Pawtucket, Rhode Island studio, and is heavily involved with community art endeavors. She travels extensively with a fondness for extended stays in Mexico, and maintains an active exhibition record. **Dorothy Pulsifer** maintains an active home studio in Middleboro, where her diverse art production includes...
digital collages with images scanned from photographs and objects. Her recent glass work involves fused glass and copper foil while her long-standing clay work focuses on wood-fired vessels, techniques she explores with fellow artists Ron Mello and Rose Essen-Dawson. She has recently returned from travels in Italy, Switzerland, and Germany. A Bridgewater resident since 1972, **Stephen Smalley** continues to offer honors art history colloquia at the university and maintains a steady exhibition record, often featuring his continuing series on Henry VIII. Trips to London further his interest in popular culture and the monarchy. He is serving as chair of the Emeritus Faculty Club Executive Committee for a fifth year.

**Stephen Smalley, ADVANTAGE: MR. HULK 2015, mixed media, 6 X 4-3/8 inches.**
Roger Dunn, ART CENTER, BSU, Acrylic on canvas, 20 X 20 inches (Photo Credit: Katie Lingan).
Roger Dunn, TAJ MAHAL, AGRA, INDIA, Acrylic on canvas, 32 X 32 inches (Photo Credit: Katie Ligan).
Joan Hausrath, RELICS AND ICONS, intaglio and lithography, 21 x 14 inches.
Joan Hausrath, CIRCLES, SITES AND RELICS, Intaglio and lithography, 21.5 x 15.5 inches.
Joan Haussath, 40 SCHOOL STREET, Intaglio and lithography, 8 X 13 inches.

Dorothy Pulsifer, SHELL VESSEL, Wood-fired pottery, 5 x 6 inches.
Dorothy Pulsifer, ART CENTER INSIDE, Digital “mosaic” image.
John Droege MARSHALL’S POINT LIGHT REFLECTED ON THE ROCKY COAST, PORT CLYDE, MAINE
[appeared on the cover of Bridgewater Review Vol. 1, No. 1 May-June, 1982], Photograph.

John Droege, MOSQUITO COVE, Photograph.
I am very grateful for having had the opportunity to pursue my dreams as the 2014–15 Presidential Fellow. As with all dreams and passions, my story begins long before a project was conceived. I was excited to attend an annual holiday gathering of friends in New Hampshire. It was December 20, 1996, and I had not connected much with this group of friends since changing jobs, as I no longer worked in New Hampshire. The 1990s were tough for finding work as a psychologist, as managed-care companies were paring down mental health benefits to consumers. This was the impetus for me to move to full-time teaching in graduate counseling. I was excited to see old friends, people I had golfed and skied with for years. One of my male friends, Mickey, had recently become a parent to his first-born, a girl. Mickey was full of stories and had many photos to share; he was a proud parent.

The evening took an unexpected twist that changed my life and, ultimately, the course of my career. Mickey had decided to explore his legacy by conducting genealogy. The birth of his daughter inspired him to investigate his heritage so that he could pass his legacy down to his children. Merriam-Webster’s Online Dictionary (2014) defines legacy as “something transmitted by or received from an ancestor or predecessor from the past.” We hand down our stories, images, values, and so much more. Preserving and sharing one’s legacy provides a sense of connection to our past, our ancestors, and our family history.

Over the course of these years I began to wonder if this sort of journey could be healing for others, too. In 2001, I visited the FamilySearch Center in Salt Lake City, Utah, to learn more about researching my legacy. As I conducted my own research, and interacted with and watched others, I became convinced that a lot of people were interested in pursuing the same quest. Although I went to the FamilySearch Center in search of information about deceased relatives, I was delighted to learn that a relative had been conducting research on my maternal family line for many years. Shortly after this visit I telephoned Margaret, my cousin...
Once removed, who lived in Ohio and was now in her 80s. She was a feisty, assertive woman, who was on a mission. During our initial conversation, Margaret suggested that I apply for membership in the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR), as my ancestor, Captain Abel Woodbury, had served in the Revolutionary War. I told her that I would give it some thought. Not surprisingly, I received an email from a woman at the DAR chapter closest to my home the very next day, and yes, I became a DAR member.

One of the more notable facts I learned was that I am a descendent of Hugo Freer/Frear, a Huguenot from France with a recorded history dating back to 1517 in Germany. Hugo Freer immigrated in 1670 with six other Huguenots to what is now New Paltz, New York. The Freer House at 32 Huguenot Street is “one of the oldest continuously inhabited settlements in the United States,” one occupied for 250 years. It is hard to describe my thoughts and feelings as I walked through the Freer house, looking at the inner structure, taking in smells of the past 344 years, and sitting in the Freer pew at the Huguenot Church. These were brave people who left Europe to seek religious freedom, and who volunteered to fight in both the French and Indian War (1754–63) and the Revolutionary War (1776–83). The Huguenot ancestors are in my father’s maternal line. What strikes me is that my orphan father was a very strong and courageous person who valued freedom, spoke out against injustice, and felt strongly about family loyalty—all characteristics exemplified by the Huguenots since the 1500s.

Over the years I dabbled in genealogy research, especially when the internet made it much more convenient. As a psychologist, I became interested in the psychological benefits of exploring one’s legacy. I published a couple of articles and offered a workshop for mental health professionals, yet the demands of teaching and the goal to become tenured seemed to pull me in a different direction. In 2008, my father died rather suddenly. He had shared very little over the years about his upbringing, as he was an orphan who suffered a life-threatening injury as a child. His passing rekindled my desire to explore my heritage and family history. During this time I created a wellness group model for adults. The groups’ goals were to enhance members’ senses of psychological well-being by increasing their connections to family, heritage, and the global community, and to promote positive development with the beneficiaries of their legacy—future generations. Group work has been my primary area of expertise in clinical work, teaching, and scholarship for more than 35 years, and so the melding of legacy and group work made sense to me. I designed the Legacy Exploration and Preservation Group Model to promote psychological health by guiding adults to engage in self-reflection, explore their family histories and traditions, rediscover their roots, deepen their life purposes, and expand their capacities for caring. Specifically, these psychoeducation/support groups aim to guide adults toward becoming “keepers of meaning” by exploring, preserving and sharing their family legacies with future generations.

Legacy Exploration and Preservation Groups (LEPG) were developed to provide a framework for group facilitators to help participants explore their legacies, to make sense of memories and information they uncover or have revealed to them, and lastly, to help...

Preserving and sharing one’s legacy provides a sense of connection to our past, our ancestors, and our family history.
evoke a shared wisdom. The LEPG project was launched in May 2013 with a Special Projects Grant from the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) and with matching funds from Bridgewater State University (BSU). This funding was provided to pilot the LEPG Model with women veterans living in Southeastern Massachusetts. In personal relationships, Prilleltensky and Prilleltensky (2006) contend that psychological health and well-being occurs when participants identify their strengths (an outcome of group work), feel empowered (by “meaning making” relative to one’s family, discovering one’s voice, and learning to make good decisions in life), and actively engage to promote change within one’s community. Robert Akeret (1991) states that sharing this wisdom provides “timeless lessons” for future generations. Though exploring and preserving one’s legacy can take many forms—compiling photo-memoir books, writing memoirs, genealogy or poetry, recording oral history, scrapbooking, producing a family cookbook, or others—the process of exploring legacy, the seeking of identity, is as important as any of the details that we learn about our pasts.

August 2013, the first LEPG Team was made up of three licensed mental health counselors, BSU alumni who had graduated with master’s degrees from the Department of Counselor Education, and a mental health counseling student who served as the Graduate Research Assistant. The project team conducted Legacy groups at BSU and two locations in Plymouth, Mass; there were three such groups in 2013-14 and three in 2014-15.

As the Legacy Exploration and Preservation Groups piloted during 2013-14 included women veterans, several key dimensions of the group’s deliberations were borrowed from the Veteran Wellness Model, an approach to mental health group work developed in 2012 specifically for wellness interventions with veterans: a sense of purpose and meaning, mental health/wellness, and social/ promote change within one’s community. Robert Akeret (1991) states that sharing this wisdom provides “timeless lessons” for future generations. Though exploring and preserving one’s legacy can take many forms—compiling photo-memoir books, writing memoirs, genealogy or poetry, recording oral history, scrapbooking, producing a family cookbook, or others—the process of exploring legacy, the seeking of identity, is as important as any of the details that we learn about our pasts.

The Presidential Fellowship 2014-15 provided me with dedicated time and resources to continue offering Legacy Exploration and Preservation Groups to adults in Southeastern Massachusetts. Today, the project continues as a multiyear, multipronged effort to expand access to Legacy Exploration and Preservation Groups at no cost to prospective members. As we do so, I am collecting quantitative and qualitative data on the effectiveness of the LEPG Model with the aim of creating an evidenced-based group intervention. In addition, I have developed an Advanced Group Counseling Certificate program for training mental health clinicians in Southeastern Massachusetts that requires its participants to complete an LEPG internship. The Fellowship year was also used to build a marketing platform for sharing this project with BSU and beyond (https://my.bridgew.edu/departments/Legacyexploration/SitePages/Home.aspx).

It is exciting to be able to combine my passion for exploring and preserving my legacy with my teaching and scholarship endeavors. The fellowship year was transformative as both a scholar and psychologist, and has underlined for me how a personal journey can become food for professional rejuvenation.
Many colleges and universities pride themselves on graduating civically minded individuals. Formal education provides a wonderful platform for introducing students to the concept of civic engagement with both teaching strategies and co-curricular activities. One such teaching strategy is “service-learning,” which integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection. Faculty members at Bridgewater State (BSU) have been teaching service-learning courses for many years and we now have 20 unique service-learning-designated courses spanning a wide variety of disciplines and benefiting hundreds of BSU students and community partners.

In his keynote address at the National Outreach Scholarship Convention at the University of Alabama in 2012, former U.S. Ambassador to South Africa and Duke University professor James A. Joseph spoke about educational commitment to civic engagement. Throughout his address, Professor Joseph referred to “values that build community” and challenged universities, to find ways to identify them. “The moral imperative of civic engagement,” he stated, “is to help transform the laissez-faire notion of live and let live to the principle of live and help live ... One of the missions of universities is to put knowledge at the service of society, [to tie] … academic incentives to community outreach. If civic engagement is an important university priority, there needs to be both guidelines and incentives that reflect what the university … claims as its values.” BSU is rising to the challenge.

My “Aha moment” resulted in the development of a service-learning course entitled Nonprofit Administration. This course was offered during the summers of 2014 and 2015. During this time, students enrolled in the class volunteered more than 160 hours of community service to 16 different nonprofit organizations located in the region. However, it is not just the community partners who benefit from service-learning courses. There are three stakeholders who are integral to the success of a service-learning experience. Students, community partners and faculty work together to ensure that each stakeholder is achieving the intended beneficial outcomes. If the strategy is successful, each stakeholder will benefit greatly from the experience.

![Figure 1: Service-Learning Stakeholders](image)

**Benefits for Students**

By surveying students, I learned that they profit in a variety of ways that include academic, professional and personal benefits. The most important academic benefit is increased understanding of course content by providing students with opportunities to apply their knowledge and skills in a nonacademic environment. The opportunity to speak to individuals outside the classroom and campus setting helps students to enhance their communication, collaboration and leadership skills. Students are assisting organizations and community leaders with operational and strategic decision making on a real-time basis – an experience that contributes to the development of critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Megan Fyfe, a student in the Nonprofit course, noted that “civic engagement through service learning edges students out of their comfort zone and … requires them to adapt to changes in their environment.” Service-learning projects enable students to gain hands-on experience that can be included on their resumes and

**Teaching Note**

Yes, We Can Make a Difference: BSU Alumni Light the Way for Service Learning

*MaryBeth Tobin*

A few years ago, I was sitting in a class learning about the American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012, when it dawned on me how boring it may be for many students to learn about tax. The Internal Revenue Code is a 75,000-page listing of rules and regulations. What a tedious task to learn the tax code. As a tax educator, how could I possibly make it more interesting and inspiring for students? After a few semi-successful attempts, two Bridgewater State alumni asked me to volunteer on a project that triggered for me an “Aha moment.”
discussed during job interviews. Many of
the students in the Nonprofit course
were excited to share their volunteer
experiences with a current or prospective
employer. Working directly with
community and organizational leaders
also allows students to expand their
professional networks. BSU student
Melanie Dean writes: “service-learning
helps us to work on our communica-
tion and research skills while develop-
ing relationships with our nonprofit
organization. Employers love to see
employees or potential employees that
are comfortable in social situations and
can present themselves well.”

Much has been written about the
younger generation’s desire to work in
environments that allow them to have
an impact. Service-learning projects
can provide students with opportunities
to explore and inform these values and
impact. Service-learning projects
also allow students to expand their
horizons and plan to continue after the class

Benefits for Community Partners
Service-learning would not be possible
without the generosity of the many
community partners who agree to
work with our students. In exchange
for their partnership, many benefits
inure to the community organizations
and leaders, including the opportu-
nity to communicate their missions
and expand their outreach. Working
with the university and its students can
increase public support and visibility for
an organization or community leader.
Student volunteers can inject new
energy, offer new ideas, develop new
resources or simply generate enthusi-
asim around an organization’s current
programming. Students will expand
capacity and add resources that may
not have otherwise been available to
the organization. Community partners
can cultivate this engagement in a new
generation of volunteers as many of the
students engaged in service-learning
continue to work with their organiza-
tions beyond the requirements of the
course. BSU student Scott Burgess
shared that “I had been thinking about
volunteering … so this class really jump
started that for me. I am giving my time
to an organization I feel strongly about
and plan to continue after the class
finish.”

Benefits for Faculty
For faculty members who develop
and teach service-learning courses, the
benefits include professional develop-
ment and personal growth. Professional
development opportunities include
compiling a distinguished teaching
portfolio, advancing scholarship
relative to service learning and provid-
ing community service. Volunteering
with community organizations and/
or facilitating a service-learning experi-
ence can often be an incredible amount
of work. However, for me and my
service-learning colleagues, the
personal rewards are worth it both
as educators and professionals in the
discipline. No reward is greater than
hearing a student claim that he/she got
so much more out of the experience
than anticipated.

Developing a Service-Learning
Course
The process of creating a service-
learning course is unique to each
faculty member and takes time to
evolve. There needs to be an authentic
connection between the course content
and the community engagement. This
connection may arise from a faculty
member’s passion for the content,
enthusiasm for civic engagement or
a simple task that creates the “Aha
moment.” I was introduced to service
learning at BSU’s faculty orientation,
the very first day I arrived on campus
five years ago. I was impressed by the
faculty members engaged in service
learning and quickly became interested
in exploring this teaching strategy.
However, I had difficulty visualizing
a connection between service learning
and the accounting and tax courses
that I teach. That vision began to
crystallize while I was volunteering on
a project to assist the start-up of a local
nonprofit organization.

As a Certified Public Accountant,
I have volunteered with numerous
nonprofits over the years to assist them
in business formation, incorporation
and the preparation of bylaws and
various other documentation required
to apply for tax-exempt status.
However, this initial administrative
hurdle is just the beginning as most
nonprofits must comply with a mountain
of state and federal regulations
and file annual forms attesting to
such compliance in order to main-
tain their tax-exempt status each
year. Tending to the administrative
requirements for nonprofit organi-
izations requires a specialized skill
set. Nonprofits need volunteers and
employees with the education and
training necessary to understand these
requirements and to assist the organiza-
tions with compliance.
The inspiration for my Nonprofit Administration course came while working with Susan Moss ('71) and James Daley ('76) on the start-up of Panther Pride Athletic Foundation (PPAF). After 36-year careers as teachers, coaches and administrators at Whitman-Hanson Regional High School (W-H), Susan and James are still contributing to the W-H community as leaders of the PPAF nonprofit organization. PPAF's mission is to grant financial support to W-H athletic programs that demonstrate a need for grant awards. PPAF prioritizes female student-athletes to ensure that their teams/programs are eligible to receive grant financial support to W-H athletic programs that demonstrate a need for funding beyond school district funding. Although all active W-H athletic programs are eligible to receive grant awards, PPAF prioritizes female student-athletes to ensure that their sports are level-funded with their male counterparts. While volunteering on this start-up project, it dawned on me what a great experience this would be for our BSU students—both business students and non-business students interested in nonprofit administration. I became interested in developing a course that focuses on nonprofit organizations and the plethora of tax-exempt rules and regulations they must follow to obtain and maintain tax-exemption.

My objective in developing the course was to achieve three student-centric goals: exposing our business students to careers in the nonprofit sector; encouraging the participation of non-business students who may not be interested in studying corporate business principles, but are interested in learning about the business aspects of nonprofit organizations; and exposing all students to volunteer opportunities and encouraging civic engagement at an early stage of their post-collegiate careers. I was interested in developing a course that had the students engaging directly with nonprofit organizations in the regional community.

Knowing that I would need assistance in developing the course, I attended BSU’s Teacher-Scholar Institute, an annual week-long intensive professional development event where faculty come together to collaborate on teaching and writing projects. This program allowed me to collaborate with colleagues across all disciplines who had already implemented service-learning in their courses or were interested in doing so. I learned different teaching philosophies and styles and developed ideas for contextualizing the content of my proposed course in order to enhance its appeal to a broader base of student interests. For example, my initial thoughts for the course included tax-exempt rules and regulations as the centerpiece with service-learning to be used as complementary “packaging.” Collaboration with colleagues helped me to reframe my thinking to encourage greater participation from students with various experiences and interests.

We discussed minor changes such as the course title (Tax-Exempt vs. Nonprofit) and the type of course offering (special topics, elective, core curriculum, etc). We also discussed major changes such as assessment (proficiency testing vs. reflective writing and journaling) and how to deliver course content so as to anchor service learning within nonprofit instruction.

The service-learning component of the course requires students to engage with a nonprofit organization (volunteer, interview administrators, invite guest speakers, etc.) and then reflect on that engagement relative to their initial thoughts on civic engagement and nonprofit administration. Instead of simply pushing course content in the direction of the students and hoping for an outcome; my goal is to foster that outcome by asking students to share their various experiences in the nonprofit sector, enhance their knowledge through peer perspective, and encourage the continuation of community engagement even after course completion. This Nonprofit course is now offered by BSU’s Accounting and Finance Department each summer and owes its inspiration to the two Bridgewater State alumni whose passion for and continued commitment to their community inspired me to share their story with BSU students.

There is a common thread that weaves its way through the community service of BSU’s students, faculty, administrators and alumni who are engaged in service-learning and civic engagement. That common thread is BSU’s value statement and the institution’s commitment to the community that it serves: “Not to be ministered unto, but to minister.” Community engagement is a value that has been pervasive at Bridgewater State for many years and the university community should be proud of the many civicly minded students it graduates and the civicly minded faculty and administrators it employs. The many service-learning courses offered at BSU help to continue that cycle. In his 1968 sermon to the congregation of Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta, Georgia, Martin Luther King Jr. preached that “greatness comes from service.” This sermon has since been paraphrased into a famous Dr. King quote: “Not everybody can be famous, but everybody can be great because greatness is determined by service.” In that spirit, we all have an opportunity to be great. Maybe it’s a course, an experience, or a simple gesture that inspires you; but if you keep an open mind, something or someone may just light the way.

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Continuing the Conversation: Scholarly Inspiration after Retirement.  
An Interview with Ed James  
Matthew R. Dasti

Ed James is Professor Emeritus of Philosophy at Bridgewater State University. His research has been published in leading journals that include Mind and Ethics. His recent work includes two papers, “Too Soon to Say” (July 2012) and “Beyond the Magical Thinking Behind the Principal Principle” (July 2015). Ed taught at BSU 1976-2009. The interview was conducted in summer 2015.

MRD: The idea for this interview has been inspired by your robust research and scholarly agenda since your retirement. What is it that drives your continued scholarly work?

EJ: Writing philosophy has always been one of my main ways of being alive, of being totally present. It’s like playing a team sport in that way, where for that time there is nothing other than the awareness of the activity - where the puck is, who has it, where the players are. So, too, with doing philosophy. That’s all there is: a focus on the idea itself, with the qualifications, the objections, the demands for clarity, consistency, and completeness - all those “players.” I still “keep up”—not as long as I once could but, I hazard, as well as I ever did. Teaching was that way, too, when a class really sang. Though I miss teaching, now I can focus my energy more on just the writing itself and the engagement with the best reasoners in the world.

MRD: I’m surprised with your answer. I was expecting you to identify some problems that have been your philosophical muse or ongoing public debates about which you hope to provide some clarity. But it seems that it is scholarly life itself that inspires you.

EJ: My scholarly engagement is more the Platonic quest for a certain kind of sense-making or discovery. It is open-ended as I hope to follow the argument wherever it leads, seeking the sense of living in the immediacy of the intellectual quest.

MRD: What I find striking is that the idea that what motivates you is the activity of philosophical writing, and getting lost in it, so to speak, and not so much a result you are concerned to achieve. But insofar as there is inquiry there must be some goal, right? Playing sports, at our best we lose ourselves, but still there is usually a goal and there are rules which govern the sport in question. You’ve mentioned some of the “rules,” so to speak, which govern your work: concern with clarity, consistency, completeness. But what is the desideratum? Take your recent paper “Too Soon to Say” (Philosophy 2012), which starts as a defense of John Rawls from a certain line of criticism, but wonderfully—in my mind—contains a sustained argument that “disagreement does not entail moral epistemic deficiency.” What do you mean by this? Why is it important? What’s at stake?

EJ: For me, philosophy should focus on the issues that we disagree on (for example, the existence of God, the meaning of life, the proper organization of society), the issues that put into question what a good reason is. Often when we disagree, what counts as good evidence or good reasons is itself part of the debate, and we have to critically examine our own perspective and assumptions. Because of this, philosophers through millennia have had logic and critical reasoning in general as a primary pursuit. In the essay, “Too Soon to Say,” I argue that the criteria we use to carry on any inquiry—clarity, consistency, coherence, completeness; call them “the Cs”—are internal to an inquiring conversation. But while reflective inquiry depends on all of these, just what those criteria mean, their “weight,” is itself open to question. For me, this is why the activity of philosophy is what is central. Whatever arguments we make will always be open to serious critique; it will always be too soon to say the Last or Best Word. And so it is that we develop our ideas, taking account of the critiques of others, and knowing fully that what we come up with will be challenged. To be result oriented is to be unaware that we are perpetually engaged in a multi-perspective conversation. This is the profoundly enriching aspect of philosophy.

MRD: So when you say “disagreement does not entail moral epistemic deficiency” you are recognizing that we can never be fully aware of all of the resources available in support of a given position. And we should thus avoid stigmatizing those who disagree with us.

EJ: Sometimes when people disagree, it leads one party to conclude that the other is not just intellectually wrong, but so unreasonable that he is morally wrong. We often see this dynamic in political debates, ethical debates, and the like. I am concerned with the fact that we probably do this too much. Moral epistemic deficiency addresses when we should rightly criticize someone for being culpably wrongheaded in reasoning — e.g., in ignoring past arguments, making obvious fallacies — and when we should rather hold off and recognize the give and take we confront all the time in the criteria we use to judge what it means to be reasonable. To engage in reflective inquiry is to be committed to meeting what I called the Cs. That’s the good news. It’s what unites all scholars, from scientists to poets, in our work. But what is essential to note here, and now the bad news, is that
we are in tension, both among ourselves and often within ourselves, as individuals, as to how the Cs are to be understood and prioritized. In philosophy, we have in the field of political thought, say, the question of how best to evaluate a government or a society. Do we prioritize equality (as would liberals), liberty (libertarians), excellence (Aristotelians), harmony (Confucians), divine command, ecological or environmental balance? The list goes on. Each one of these, and indeed, each version of these, has strengths and weaknesses with respect to the Cs. For starters, each one is initially incomplete from the perspective of the others and seeks either to show the others how it can include their values or why it should exclude their values when considering political organization.

**MRD:** Your two points blend together nicely. Philosophical inquiry focuses both on the activity of sense-making or discovery, and a concern to recognize that the criteria that govern inquiry are, to some degree, fluid. They seem to work together to hopefully produce both an epistemic humility and a willingness to continue the inquiry.

**EJ:** And I would draw from this a radical conclusion. Too often, philosophers (myself included) have viewed philosophy as politics by other means. In this vein, philosophy has had an essentially combative side to it—a feeling that it is important to “win” the argument, to advance one’s cause. But if sense making is truly coupled with epistemic humility, then what is important is not to win the argument but to carry the discussion further in the light of that uncertainty. This might sound tamer, but it is not, for it calls for a new view of citizenship as an engagement in political inquiry.

**MRD:** Thinking about philosophical citizenship, it seems that much of your work tries to navigate how we deal with those things that sit at the margins of public rationality (pseudoscience, moral evil, the inner voice of conscience, disagreement about the basic criteria for rationality itself, etc.). But in your latest work on probability (“Beyond the Magical Thinking Behind the Principal Principle”), you seem to be challenging a basic feature of rationality by showing that projecting probabilities based on past experience cannot be entirely justified in independent grounds. Could you explain what you are doing in this work, and how it connects to your broader concerns?

**EJ:** My more recent work on applied probability continues my exploration of the strengths and limits of reason. The strength of probability is that it does (or should) guide us in our daily activities, but, and now a limit, it does not apply to any particular single case. At first glance this appears contradictory: probability guides us, it does not apply in the single case, and yet we act in the single case. A good deal of scholarly work has tried to show that probability does apply to the single case, work that I argue does not succeed. For probability is confirmed or disconfirmed by extended observations of sequences or aggregate. To claim, for example, that there is a 40% chance of rain under these conditions is an elliptical way of saying that in the long run it rains around 40% of the time in these conditions. Hence, to apply probability to the single case, to say that the 40% applies to this case is to infer a property of the part, the single case, from the property of the whole, the aggregate or sequence. In thinking this way, we fall prey to the fallacy of division, of mistakenly thinking that a property of the whole must be a property of its parts.

**MRD:** How then should we use probability to guide us?

**EJ:** First, we need to be very clear that when we speak of the probability of a single case we are really speaking of a long-range projection: all we know, if we’ve got the long-range distribution right, is that the type of event, in this case rain, will hover around that distribution. Hence, when we make a bet on a probability distribution (that is, let probability guide us), our bet should be long-term, where we ask ourselves whether we can stay the course in the long run. Second, what of single cases that are “one-offs,” that don’t repeat themselves? What of an operation, say, where we are told by the surgeon that we have very good chances of coming through it? Here, there is no staying the course for us, for we will, hopefully, meet this case but once. What we want is just what we don’t have: probability applying here and now, the gods of chance working on our behalf. Nor do we have what the surgeon has: a long-run projection that she lives through, knowing that most cases over the long haul will hover around these good odds. We, on the other hand, face “one-offs.” All we can do in these circumstances, I argue, is bundle the many cases of similar probabilities—the “good odds” of crossing the street at a busy intersection, the good odds of it not raining on our picnic—into one long-run projection. What we know, then, is that the long-run projection, even if we’ve got it right, will come out bad in some of these cases and we can’t pick the cases.

**MRD:** For me, one upshot of this critique is that we must confront the inevitable place of luck in our lives.

**EJ:** Precisely! Those of us who have had “successful” lives, to my mind, too readily take more credit (and spread more blame) than is deserved. While we might have made all the right decisions, in the end, the fact that those decisions came out “right” was part and parcel of a bundled probabilistic distribution. All we can hope is that our good odds play out in the matters that really count and that when our plans do work out, we are more grateful than proud.

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David and Goliath, Bonnie and Clyde, Orville and Wilbur. The classic stories and moral lessons attached to these pairs of historical characters are all so well known to us that their very mention evokes deeper messages. We all know these stories as much (or more) for what they symbolize than we do for their details. And so, one might ask: why write a book about any of these pairs? Do we really need to know anything more about them? Pulitzer Prize-winning and beloved author David McCullough tackles the last of these three pairs in his most recent, voluminous (368-page) effort. It is my belief that he wrote The Wright Brothers as both a primer biography and a screen play. The prose is superb and, though their story has already been told by many others, there are actually some new tidbits of research in McCullough’s work that were previously unknown. For those of us who have never read about the Wright Brothers and want to know about their social lives, family happenings, and the places that they went to, this is the book for you. Those who are searching for deeper insight as to the engineering, science, and methods of construction of their flying machines, there are plenty of other, more suitable books.

The opening paragraph (and perhaps what will become the opening scene of the screen play) reads as follows: “In as strong a photograph as any taken of the brothers together, they sit side by side on the back porch steps of the Wright family home on a small side street on the west end of Dayton, Ohio. The year was 1909, the peak of their fame. Wilbur was forty-two, Orville thirty-eight. Wilbur, with a long poker face, looks off to one side, as though his mind were on other things, which most likely it was. He is lean, gaunt, long of nose and chin, clean-shaven, and bald. He wears a plain dark suit and high-laced shoes, much in the manner of their preacher father” (5).

Much later in the book, a passage describes the first flight of their father (Milton Wright, a United Brethren in Christ church bishop): “They took off, soaring over Huffman Prairie at about 350 feet for a good six minutes, during which the Bishop’s only words were, “Higher Orville, higher!” (253). Here it is tempting to imagine oneself a Hollywood screenwriter, closing the film with this dialogue and morphing the Wrights’ airplane into a modern Boeing that disappears into the sunset as the credits start to roll. (On second thought, that’s really too hokey, and probably why Hollywood is not knocking at my door).

Among these two passages are mostly snippets that relate the interesting happenings in the brothers’ lives, but ones that are largely unrelated to their great technological accomplishments. McCullough dedicates 18 lines to the exploits of them almost catching a mouse and only six lines to describing the “hip cradle” that was ultimately one of the single most important discoveries of their combined career. Each of these snippets would make great scenes in the movie, which will undoubtedly be visually fantastic and feature dozens of compelling characters. There will even be a French-born villain with a cool name (Octave Chanute) who tries to take credit for the brothers’ work, but is thwarted in the end.

McCullough’s limited treatment of the technical details involved is illustrated perhaps most clearly by his treatment of a 1907 letter from Wilbur, writing from Washington, DC, to Orville, who was in France. In the letter, Wilbur warns his younger brother not to socialize...
too much, both because it would tire him and, perhaps, reveal to others their airplane secrets. “Do not let people talk to you all day and night. It will wear you out, before you are ready for real business. Courtesy has limits. If necessary appoint some hour in the daytime and refuse absolutely to receive visitors even for a minute at other times. Do not receive anyone after 8 o’clock at night” (174). McCullough adds: “Then after some technical discussion about the rudder, he wrote again. ‘I can only tell you to be extraordinarily cautious.’” Here would have been an ideal place for the author to expand upon the Wrights’ “technical discussions.” We can only surmise that McCullough does not want to bore his readers with the details. That’s too bad. For me, the reference to the technicalities of the rudder was compelling enough to prompt me to look up and read the rest of the letter in the Wilbur and Orville Wright Papers in the Library of Congress. In the end, I think McCullough and his editors may have underestimated the numbers of us “Wright Geeks” out here who are fascinated by the technical details of the history of flight.

The Wright Brothers is a good, light and enjoyable summer read, regardless of one’s level of technical knowledge about aviation. For readers who would like a more technical and complete explanation of how the brothers came to invent the first controllable and sustainable flying machine as well as a recounting of the other parts of their lives, The Bishop’s Boys by Tom D. Crouch (W.W. Norton, 2003) is the book you want. Be warned, however: Crouch’s book is much longer and takes considerably more time to digest. One is not better than the other; they each serve their own specific purpose. But only one of them is likely to inspire a Hollywood movie.

In Pursuit of an Ice Pact

Robert Hellström


In Glaciers: The Politics of Ice, Argentine author Jorge Daniel Taillant unravels the complex interplay between environmental protection, political will, and the unimaginable influence of big mining companies in the ice-capped Andes Mountains of South America. Looking through scientific lenses, his book traces the work of respected activists promoting environmental laws to protect vital water resources. Taillant identifies “cryoactivism” as a central theme behind Argentine Environmental Secretary Romina Picolotti’s relentless goal to enact the world’s first national glacier protection law. Her opponents, the provincial political leaders who support the mining industry, have mounted swift and deliberate attacks to derail Picolotti’s train. Peter Munk, president of Barrick Gold, the world’s largest gold mining corporation, whose eyes are set on prospecting in the Andes, is clearly Picolotti’s most powerful and politically manipulative adversary. Taillant’s close attention to detail is supported by copious references to interviews, facts, and helpful Internet links that actively engage the reader. No matter how you read Taillant’s latest detective work on mining operations, his attention to scientific and legal evidence, and his suspenseful unraveling of covert relations between mining and politics will inspire you to read on.

Taillant opens his story with an overview that assures his audience that this is neither a scientific textbook nor a dreary account of conservationist efforts to push an environmental agenda. It is, rather, “a social, cultural, and political introspection into our cryosphere (the world of ice) that brings critical complex and rather obscure scientific information about ice and glaciers into perspective for our nonscientific lives” (xxi). Chapter 1 introduces the major players, namely Picolotti, Barrick, money-hungry gold prospectors, federal government officials and Argentina’s provincial government leaders. The author illustrates the impact of the mining corporations, describing their cutting of roads...
motivation is clear: to protect water resources that come from glaciers that take different shapes. These include landforms below glaciers that freeze and thaw during the warm and cold seasons or the daily cycles of intense sunlight and clear cold nights. These features also include permafrost (partially frozen soils), hidden rock glaciers containing vast stores of frozen water and debris-covered glaciers protected from the sunlight by a thin layer of rocks, all of which occur at elevations below the common, white-snow-covered glaciers. And yet, even as these dangers to glacier-based water resources are detailed, mining companies and local provinces in Argentina continue to decry the newly passed national glacier law as economically crippling. The reader is left wondering about the mentality of Barrick Gold: “what are they thinking…?” (83).

Taillant’s treatment of the politics of climate science is captivating to both scientists and policy watchers. His writing style is very accessible, and his tactical story-telling approach and layperson analogies help readers understand the complex nature of glaciers and periglacial environments and the interplay between political, economic, environmental and corporate incentives. This author weaves science and politics very effectively and without seriously confusing the reader, a rare skill. Taillant’s passion and dedication to glacier protection jumps off the pages throughout the book and is especially evident in Chapter 9, where he recounts his own endeavors to acquire on-site and satellite images to assist with the glacier and periglacial environment inventory, a critical step in implementing the glacial protection law. Still, some of this book is heavy going. Readers of Glaciers: The Politics of Ice should approach it with an open mind, read no more than two chapters in one sitting, and consider the broader impact of Taillant’s story. If nothing else, you will definitely learn some fascinating, surprising facts about the importance of ice as a fresh-water resource on our planet.
Small Miracles All Around Us

Todd Harris


Are you reading this book review on your iPad, perhaps in the air-conditioned comfort of your home? Are you reading it at night, possibly while sipping a glass of water, with National Public Radio playing in the background? While doing so, did you steal a fleeting glance at your watch or cell phone, to see what time it is? If you are participating in any or all of these activities, you are immersing yourself in the subject matter of Steven Johnson’s entertaining and intriguing new book How We Got to Now: Six Innovations That Made the Modern World. None of these activities seems remarkable to us today, and we likely take these modern conveniences for granted. Johnson’s book reminds us that we shouldn’t. For example, when most of us in the developed world get a drink of water from the tap, we trust that it won’t kill us within a few days. When the sun sets, we can plan to engage in activities other than sleep. Prior generations had no such luxuries.

Johnson is a popular and prolific science and technology writer who writes with a literary style that is accessible, clear and engaging. His beautifully illustrated book (and the accompanying six-part PBS documentary series) takes readers on a multi-century and multi-continent tour of the origins of ideas that make modern life possible. The book is organized around six big ideas: Glass, Cold, Sound, Clean, Time, and Light. Johnson gives each one its own chapter and neatly summarizes its development and consequences. Curiously, Johnson never informs the reader why these particular six ideas attracted his attention, but that omission constitutes only a minor irritant.

How We Got to Now makes two central arguments. First, Johnson wants us to examine a world that we take for granted with a fresh set of eyes. We are surrounded by objects that are the legacies of thousands of inventors, hackers, and dreamers, some widely known (nice to see you again, Alexander Graham Bell), and some heretofore lost to the sands of history (pleased to make your acquaintance, Charles Babbage, inventor of the first mechanical computer in the early nineteenth century). Johnson makes the point that our day-to-day happiness has been influenced more by these legions of tinkerers than by our celebrated politicians, generals, statesmen and corporate titans. In doing so, Johnson effectively shovels more dirt onto the coffin of Thomas Carlyle’s “Great Man” view of history, replacing it with history as “Great Object.” Given the choice to honor Abraham Lincoln or the wristwatch, Johnson tells us to take the watch.

The second principal argument that Johnson advances involves consequences. While most innovations are initially developed to fix a specific problem (i.e. sun goes down + people can’t see = all productive work ceases, prompting the search for economical source of artificial light), they often have unforeseen effects far beyond their original domain. Some of these consequences are intuitive and obvious; others remain more subtle, leaving behind less visible causal fingerprints. Johnson hopscotches through history following the links in these strange chains of influence, and explores their cultural and social implications.
For example, in 1902, a Brooklyn-based printing company retained a young engineer named Willis Carrier to solve a problem that had long bedeviled the trade: keeping ink from smearing during the humid summer months. Carrier’s “apparatus for treating air” (today, we call it an “air conditioner”) effectively removed the humidity from the printing room but had a second, South to North that had started after the Civil War began to reverse course. New York, Pennsylvania and Illinois were the nation’s three most populous states in 1900. Today, California, Texas and Florida earn that distinction. In turn, this migration redrew the political map of America. Warm-climate states gained 29 Electoral College votes between 1940 and 1980, they improve upon the status quo and succeed in achieving a specific, local objective. Viewed through this lens, innovation moves along a positive arc over time. The problem lies with those unintended consequences and other externalities. A car will get you from Boston to Bridgewater more quickly than a horse-drawn carriage, but it would be hard to make the argument that the automobile is an unalloyed social good.

A second noteworthy aspect of the book is that it is written almost exclusively from a North American and European perspective. As Johnson mentions, the story of how Brazil or China “got to now” would be very different and no less entertaining. Even though this is primarily a European/North American story, the innovations included in the book have diffused across the world. As the world becomes even more interconnected, we can expect that innovations will be less constrained by geographic boundaries and national identities. But that is a story that remains to be told. Until then, Johnson’s How We Got to Now proves a competent guide to the history behind some of most important comforts and necessities of modern life.

Johnson wants us to examine a world that we take for granted with a fresh set of eyes. We are surrounded by objects that are the legacies of thousands of inventors, hackers, and dreamers, some widely known … and some heretofore lost to the sands of history.

entirely unexpected benefit. It chilled the air, an effect that Carrier first noticed when his colleagues suddenly started eating lunch next to the printing presses. Carrier then began to work on other devices that could regulate the humidity and temperature of indoor spaces. Between 1925 and 1950, most people experienced air conditioning only in large public spaces such as movie theaters, department stores and office buildings, but by the mid-1950s, the technology had spread to people’s homes, and areas of the United States that had once been insufferably hot and humid suddenly seemed much more hospitable. By the mid-1960s, the great migration of Americans from the comparatively frigid states of the Northeast and the Rust Belt lost 31. Johnson notes that this demographic shift is not solely a U.S. phenomenon, as the fastest-growing megacities are disproportionately located in tropical climates (Bangkok, Dubai, and Jakarta). Johnson calls his approach “long-zoom history”: more than a century after young Carrier solved an ink-smearing problem in Brooklyn, massive cities sprouted in the desert.

Two other aspects of this book warrant mention. The first is that Johnson generally maintains an agnostic stance toward the value of the innovations that he writes about. Many innovations get “selected” by society because they improve upon the status quo and succeed in achieving a specific, local objective. Viewed through this lens, innovation moves along a positive arc over time. The problem lies with those unintended consequences and other externalities. A car will get you from Boston to Bridgewater more quickly than a horse-drawn carriage, but it would be hard to make the argument that the automobile is an unalloyed social good.

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The Novel We Deserve

Lee Torda


At the moment I write this, Harper Lee’s Go Set a Watchman, is sitting at number two on the New York Times Best Sellers List, a dip from the number-one spot it occupied since its publication in July. I write with some certainty that by the time this review comes to print anyone who has interest in reading Watchman will have done so—a relief, since I have no desire to ruin it for any would-be reader, particularly those for whom, out of a deep nostalgia for Lee’s To Kill a Mockingbird, Watchman is the reading event of the year.

I will confess, at the outset, I am not a true believer. The worth of Mockingbird is an argument I have over and over with my best friend, a woman who became a lawyer due, in part, to Atticus Finch. She sees it as a compelling story about good people doing right in the face of an ever-present evil. Many other readers believe some version of that as well. I, though, think the original story is bulky and saccharine. So read on knowing that fact.

I could barely stand to finish Watchman. There’s not enough story for me and too many speeches. There is also a nearly useless, sort of love story that never really starts and never really ends. There are some early passages that remind me of the nostalgia and longing for something gone that Mockingbird managed, but that disappears as we move, as readers, to the matter at hand—Scout’s, not even Scout anymore, but Jean Louise Finch’s return to her home, Maycomb, Alabama, from her life in New York City. Once back in town, Jean Louise is confronted with the truth that her father, Atticus, her hero as well as ours, turns out to be a racist. Apparently, all those years ago, when, as Scout, Jean Louise watched her father defend an innocent black man against a rape charge (the central story of Mockingbird here rendered to a few lines), he wasn’t doing it because he believed it was the right thing to do. Atticus defended the man out of respect for the law. Citing Thomas Jefferson, Atticus believes that the black citizens of Maycomb are not yet ready for the freedoms and duties of full citizenship.

The sense of betrayal Jean Louise feels in Watchman is nothing compared, it seems, to what readers of Watchman experience, but sequels sometimes betray our great hopes and desires for the characters we love. Jean Louise eventually determines that there is no longer any place for her in Maycomb, and she bundles herself back to New York City, reconciled to, if disillusioned with, Atticus. We might be meant to see the Atticus of Watchman as the old, dying guard (Atticus suffers from rheumatoid arthritis in the story), and that Jean Louise is the new, bright guard—twice in the novel her character is described as “seeing no color.”

More compelling to me than the reveal of Atticus’s true nature is the reveal of the true nature of the relationship between Jean Louise and the now retired Calpurnia—the black housekeeper who raised Scout. In the context of the very light story, one of Calpurnia’s sons hits a drunk, white resident of Maycomb, killing him. Atticus intends to defend Cal’s son but only in order to keep the NAACP from stepping in to do the job and, in the process, bring the civil rights movement to Maycomb. While no more comes of that plot, it serves to reunite Jean Louise with Cal. When Cal reacts to Jean Louise’s overtures of sympathy and support with cool formality, the story feels most true. It’s nonsense for Jean Louise to see no color in Maycomb, and Cal knows it. Reading Watchman in 2015, we do too.

In that way, the novel is also strangely and sadly of the moment—a year after Michael Brown and Ferguson, and in the face of the deaths of Trayvon Martin, Sandra Bland, Tamir Rice, Freddie Gray, a list that grows too long. Here we are in the midst of #BlackLivesMatter. And there is old...
In the novel itself, it’s a bizarre and incongruous divergence, but any reader will see in it the seeds of *To Kill a Mockingbird*.

Atticus talking states’ rights and some weird, screwed-up noblesse oblige that sounds like it could come out of the mouth of one of the people currently running for the presidency. The Jean Louises of the world seem not to have caught hold.

The promise of Atticus in *Mockingbird* came to a particularly ugly end this summer in *Watchman*, just as so many white readers are realizing that our America is not the America we imagined it to be for our fellow black and brown citizens. It’s a time of disillusionment, a long time coming, all the way around.

I have read, and perhaps with more interest and greater attention, all the matter surrounding *Watchman*. I was unsurprised to read in *The New York Times*, upon the novel’s publication, about the role Lee’s editor, Therese von Hofhoff Torrey, played in bringing *Mockingbird* into being. A great editor can do quite a lot for a writer with the invisible, potent hand of good readership: they find the story the author meant to tell and generously help them to tell it. Embedded in the middle of *Watchman*, soon after Jean Louise has made her discovery of Atticus’s betrayal, she slips into a daydream of Jem (who is dead before *Watchman* begins) and Dill (who has long since left Maycomb). In the novel itself, it’s a bizarre and incongruous divergence, but any reader will see in it the seeds of *To Kill a Mockingbird*. In the end, having finally, finally read the novel, the long-awaited, desperately anticipated novel, I can say that I believe that *Mockingbird* is the story Lee wanted to tell, but *Watchman* might be the novel we deserve.

I cannot recommend *Watchman* to anyone, most of all to those who know and love *Mockingbird*. But more than any sympathy for the reader I might have, I feel badly for Harper Lee. We could not simply leave her and her legacy be. And now look what we’ve done: we’ll never read or think about Lee as a writer in the same way again. Atticus once explained to Scout, “Mockingbirds don’t do one thing but make music for us to enjoy … they don’t do one thing but sing their hearts out for us. That’s why it’s a sin to kill a mockingbird.” A lesson the reading public didn’t learn. But, having read *Go Set A Watchman*, I find myself caught up by a different and more brutal truth: we are complicit in the landscape that gave us, in one criminally hot summer, *Go Set A Watchman* and a public unhappy to read it for the truths a dug-up draft of a novel from the past tells us about ourselves now.

Lee Torda is Assistant Professor of English and Administrator of the Writing Program.

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**Call for Submissions**

*Bridgewater Review* invites submissions from full- and part-time faculty members and librarians, and others in the BSU community. *Bridgewater Review* is published twice yearly by the faculty and librarians, of Bridgewater State University. It provides a forum for campus-wide conversations pertaining to research, teaching, and creative expression, as well as a showcase for faculty art. Articles in all disciplines and genres are welcome and encouraged, including scholarship about research interests and trends, scholarship about teaching and learning, creative writing, and short reviews of other publications.

Articles should be 1700-2200 words in length, though shorter articles will also be considered. Creative writing can be submitted at lengths briefer than 2200 words. Those wishing to submit are asked to consult the *Bridgewater Review* submission guidelines (available from the Editor). In keeping with the founding spirit of our faculty magazine, the editors are equally interested in unfinished pieces of writing that may need assistance with revision and in polished pieces that are publication ready. All submissions will be reviewed, but there is no guarantee that submitted work will be published.

*Bridgewater Review* also welcomes Letters to the Editor with the hope that *BR* may become a locus for community discussion at Bridgewater State University.

Submissions should be sent electronically to:
Andrew Holman
Editor,*
Bridgewater Review
bridgewater.review@bridgew.edu

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Disquietude*

by Panteha Sanati

In a room full of life, i
stand
Alone
holding not my genitals
in shame, modesty or the confusion
breeding in every turn of the room
every fold of time and each conversation
But hold I shame itself as I mingle
with my old companion, regret
wrapped around me like a an endless trail of wool
Inviting itself to every venue
every solid space beneath the invisible shield of
chatter, laughter and half hearted compliments
and the cold draft with each arrival
In this room, full of life, i
stand
Alone
dissolved in my own voice,
is a faint sign of me
or what and who I suspect is me
uttering words clumsily veiled in prescribed civility
as the stale social clamor dissolves and returns
that which I think is me
here i stand
Alone,
but I might as well be crawling on my knees and hands
as regret secures blindfolds upon my eyes
feeling around for who I think I am supposed to be
my essence
as when it was authentic and inviolate
many nights and lights ago
if there ever was such an anomaly
here i stand
Alone
Negotiating the endless trail of wool
and the constant cacophony of ambivalence
marching closer
from within my very center
here i stand

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