

WEINBERG

The Magazine of the Judd A.
and Marjorie Weinberg
College of Arts and Sciences

Northwestern
University

Spring/Summer 2018
Volume 6
Number 1



**THE ART & SCIENCE OF
ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

[WEINBERG LENS]

A MUMMY'S
MYSTERIES

A portrait of a doe-eyed young girl peers out from the linen wrappings of a 1,900-year-old mummy. Her visage was among the extraordinarily rare mummy portraits in "Paint the Eyes Softer: Mummy Portraits from Roman Egypt," an exhibit at the Block Museum of Art this winter.

The mummy and exhibit were the focus of an advanced undergraduate seminar during which students performed hands-on work to learn how ancient materials were made, used and buried.

"Extraordinary," **Anna Tolley '18** said of the experience of working directly with the mummy. "The opportunity to study an archaeological object was something I couldn't believe was available to me."



LEARN MORE ABOUT

the exhibit and the seminar:
wcas.nu/mummy-class

PHOTO: NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY



"I understood racial segregation, the humiliation of having to go to the back of the bus, to have our grandparents referred to as 'Boy' and 'Auntie.' I understood it all in a very personal way."

—ALDON MORRIS

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The Scholar Resurrected

BY LISA STEIN

A hardscrabble upbringing in Jim Crow Mississippi laid the groundwork for sociologist **Aldon Morris's** lifelong study of race and inequality.

PHOTO: ROB HART

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When Students and Alumni Connect

BY DANIEL P. SMITH

Weinberg College alumni can have an inspirational effect on current students finding their way. Just ask **Maggie Hoffman '18** and **Colleen Van Ham '94**.



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The Art & Science of Entrepreneurship

BY ERIN PETERSON

A background in the liberal arts might not be regarded as essential for an entrepreneurial career. But perhaps it should be.



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Cultures of Innovation

The word “entrepreneur” has a particular connotation in today’s economy and society. Social entrepreneurs transform activism and services, while digital entrepreneurs develop the apps that increasingly structure our lives. But the word also suggests a mindset beyond those activities. It signals a type of creativity and innovation—the ability to recognize societal or individual needs and develop the means to satisfy them. This activity requires empathy and imagination, the capacity to see the world through the eyes of others, and the ability to imagine new solutions to the problems surveyed.

Moreover, the word “entrepreneurship” points to a set of skills that are absolutely necessary for working with a group. For though our image of the entrepreneur might be of a solitary agent, the reality is rather different. Entrepreneurs often end up being managers of small businesses, responsible for motivating and inspiring others to advance their ideas. And to me the word “entrepreneur” also indicates a certain adaptability and flexibility. The ethos of entrepreneurship is one of serial engagements and a certain restlessness.

I must confess that to my ears, the word “entrepreneur” is by now unfortunately hackneyed, spoiled by overuse in the verbal hyperinflation of our sometimes ironically labeled “knowledge” economy. But when I think about its connotations in a *lived* sense—empathy and imagination, creativity and innovation, adaptability and flexibility—I recognize ways in which the interdisciplinary arts and sciences support precisely the ways of thinking that entrepreneurship requires.

Our interdisciplinary degree compels our students to encounter various methodologies that inculcate the values of empathy, creativity and teamwork. The breadth of our curriculum encourages the development of an adaptable mindset. And our faculty members model entrepreneurship in their research—running laboratories with scores of investigators, pursuing questions of critical interest to society, and conducting research in all corners of the earth.

By drawing our undergraduate and graduate students into our research enterprise to produce new knowledge, we demonstrate a culture of innovation and the thoughtful entrepreneurship our society craves.



Adrian Randolph
DEAN, WEINBERG COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES



PHOTO: ROB HART

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Cover photo of Sam Kim '20 by Rob Hart

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Northwestern

GLOBAL HEALTH STUDIES CHARTS NEW TERRITORY

In its first year as a major, the program is celebrated as one of the most innovative global initiatives in higher education

BY DANIEL P. SMITH

Global Health Studies is growing up fast. A popular minor among Northwestern University students since its debut in 2004, Global Health Studies was made an adjunct major last year. Since September 2017, more than 80 students have declared the major, and the program will celebrate its first 15 graduates in June. The immediate popularity of the Global Health Studies major does not surprise program director **William Leonard**, who says many of today’s students arrive on campus with a rich global perspective and earnest desire to tackle pressing world issues.

“Students are recognizing problems that shouldn’t exist in the world—problems like malnutrition, infant mortality and infectious diseases. They are embracing the challenge of addressing these issues in new and creative ways,” says Leonard, the Abraham Harris Professor of Anthropology.

Among the first undergraduate programs of its kind, Global Health Studies has routinely drawn about 300 minors each year. The interdisciplinary program attracts students from all six of Northwestern’s undergraduate schools and includes core courses such as Global Bioethics, Volunteerism and International Public Health.

The program requires students to complete a study-abroad experience, typically at a partner institution overseas. Past students have traveled to Serbia and Bosnia-Herzegovina with assistant professor of instruction **Peter Locke** to study post-conflict mental health, for example, and to Tanzania with assistant professor of instruction **Noelle Sullivan** to study local health issues with students from the University of Dar es Salaam.



PHOTO: NORTHWESTERN GLOBAL BRIGADES

“Students are recognizing problems that shouldn’t exist in the world. They are embracing the challenge of addressing these issues in new and creative ways.”

WILLIAM LEONARD, the Abraham Harris Professor of Anthropology

“We want to provide students with the deepest immersion possible in global health,” Leonard says, noting that graduates have pursued careers in fields such as medicine, public health, healthcare consulting and international development.

Earlier this year, the Institute of International Education included the Global Health Studies program among its Andrew Heiskell Award honorees—a nod to the program’s innovative curriculum and the unique international opportunities it creates.

Leonard adds that the program promotes interdisciplinary thinking across three key areas: data science, intercultural exchange and the natural world. All are priorities for the College as it prepares students for the challenges of the 21st century.

“Global Health Studies integrates across all those domains,” Leonard says. “It provides larger critical and social perspectives to help students understand the broad numbers and trends in global health while they pursue thoughtful action.” ■



Reconnecting Art and Science in the Classroom

“Radical diversity of thought is absolutely essential, and perfectly possible,” argue Dean **Adrian Randolph** and McCormick School of Engineering Dean **Julio Ottino**.

Watch video: wcas.nu/art-science-classroom



Tell Them We Are Rising

Weinberg College faculty, including historian **Martha Biondi** (left) and Provost **Jonathan Holloway**, feature prominently in a PBS documentary about the history of America’s black colleges.

Read more: wcas.nu/we-are-rising



The Sounds of a Day in Less Than Two Minutes

A seismometer near the Northwestern campus compresses 24 hours of signals from oceans, earthquakes and weather into a strikingly beautiful recording.

Listen to recording: wcas.nu/sounds-of-a-day



WINGS OVER TRAFALGAR SQUARE

BY LISA STEIN

The ghost of the Lamassu, an Assyrian statue that once guarded the gate to the ancient city of Nineveh in present-day Iraq, now haunts the Fourth Plinth in London's Trafalgar Square in a very different form.

With the head of a man, wings of an eagle and body of a bull, the mythological creature was known for its protective qualities. Created in 700 BC, the sculpture was destroyed by ISIS in 2015 as the world watched with horror.

"It didn't matter if you were for the war or against the war," says Lamassu re-creator **Michael Rakowitz**, professor of art theory and practice. "This was something that everyone could agree was unacceptable and tragic."

While the original was carved from limestone, Rakowitz and

assistants made the new version from 10,500 empty Iraqi date-syrup cans affixed to a steel armature. The cans reference the country's date-syrup industry, which was nearly destroyed by the Iraq wars and the resulting ecological devastation. They also recall the ancient Iraqi tradition of placing a date in the mouth of a newborn baby, to make sure its first taste of life is sweet.

Titled *The Invisible Enemy Should Not Exist*, the Lamassu is just one part of Rakowitz's long-term project to reconstruct the 7,000 artifacts at the National Museum of Iraq that were stolen or damaged during the 2003 invasion, as well as those destroyed at archaeological sites and museums in the aftermath of the war. He sees his efforts as a way to acknowledge not only the destruction of artworks, but also the many lives lost in the war.

"I don't ever want to say that I'm making doubles, because the originals are lost forever—the same way that those people who perished during the war cannot be put back together again," Rakowitz says. ■

PHOTO: GAUTIER DABLONDE



Poetry and Chemistry

A visit by poet and Nobel-winning chemist Roald Hoffmann prompts students, faculty and alumni to reflect on the parallels between the disciplines.

Read more: wcas.nu/poetry-and-chemistry



Welcome to "Smellovision"

An innovation by neuroscientist **Daniel Dombeck** and Ph.D. student **Brad Radvansky** could help tech developers incorporate smell into virtual reality systems.

Read more: wcas.nu/smellovision



Finding the Power Grid's Weak Spots

A comprehensive analysis by Weinberg College physicists shows where small vulnerabilities could trigger cascading power outages.

Read more: wcas.nu/grid-weak-spots



Making the Case for Paid Family Leave

Anthropologist **Thom McDade** and sociologist **Christine Percheski** show how robust paid leave would improve children's health from birth onward.

Read more: wcas.nu/paid-family-leave



How Gun Ownership Shapes National Politics

Doctoral student **Matthew Lacombe** explains how and why gun ownership became a potent political identity.

Read more: wcas.nu/politics-and-guns



"Voices from the Rubble"

Political scientist **Wendy Pearlman** relates findings from her research on Syrian refugees in a cover story for *TIME*'s March 12 international editions.

Read more: wcas.nu/voices-rubble



Ali Qureshi

Economics and Political Science
Class of 2019

INTERVIEW BY DANIEL P. SMITH

Ali Qureshi just wanted to play some pick-up cricket at Patten Gymnasium.

Instead, he ended up transforming a ragtag group of cricketers into the popular Northwestern Club Cricket team, whose 35 members compete regionally throughout the fall and spring.

In building the team, which includes members from India, Pakistan and across the United States, Qureshi didn't merely launch Northwestern's 35th club sport. He also made it comfortable for the diverse team to connect across cultural differences.

In recognition of his efforts, the Office of Student Engagement honored Qureshi with a 2017 Wildcat Impact Award.

Why cricket?

I grew up in Pakistan, where cricket is like a religion. You know how in America, you have the Super Bowl and the World Series? With all due respect, where I grew up, cricket is much bigger. It's more than a sport for us. It's a way of life.

How did the Northwestern cricket team come to be?

We started playing pick-up games in 2015 with about 20 players. Every week, more people started showing up. Eventually there were like 40 people. And that's when the idea struck: if these guys can show up and play their hearts out in such an informal setting, what could we achieve if we became a club team?

And it's not just students from Pakistan.

Sport is a universal language. When people are in a stadium cheering for a team, everyone is in sync. When students from Boston, New York and Chicago came to join the team, they had never even seen a cricket game before. But the energy on the field was so contagious that they became more passionate than us at some point.



What makes this club unique?

Initially we were just a bunch of guys running back and forth on a field. I thought, if we keep going this way and I'm the only one making decisions, we're not going to go anywhere. I realized that a good leader is someone who creates more and better leaders. So we instituted rotational coaching, which gives everyone a chance to organize a practice. We also have a range of committees overseeing things like grant applications, logistics and finance. We even have an arbitration committee, because there can be occasional friction in a group of 35 unique guys.

What have you learned as a result of this experience?

The most important thing to me is that every single person who shows up to practice feels important and goes home feeling fulfilled. So after every practice, I try to evaluate myself and get feedback on how I can better provide that sense of respect and belonging. The importance of connecting with people individually and as a team—that's what cricket has taught me. ■

The founder of the Northwestern Club Cricket team applies the lessons of the sport on and off the field.

PHOTO: ROB HART

CONFRONTING GLOBAL POVERTY

Development economists like Christopher Udry are identifying the root causes of poverty in the developing world—and potential solutions

BY DANIEL P. SMITH

Economist **Christopher Udry** has never forgotten his 10-year-old neighbor in Ghana, where he served as a Peace Corps volunteer after college.

The girl was bright, motivated and spoke five languages. She nevertheless quit school to take care of her siblings while her mother worked to support her family.

"Think of the lost value to the world—all the undeveloped ideas and unrecognized creativity," Udry says. "Hundreds of millions of kids just like her are born into poverty, without an opportunity to realize their potential."

Unwilling to accept that reality, Udry has spent his career since then studying the economics of developing nations. Today, Udry is among the foremost U.S. authorities on development in Africa.

"I can't tolerate the idea of living in a world in which many parents have to make choices about which child receives enough food to eat," says Udry, the Robert E. and Emily King Professor of Economics.

Udry—who began his academic career as an assistant professor at Northwestern in 1990—has returned to the University after 19 years at Yale, where he directed the Economic Growth Center and served as the chair of the economics department. He is a recognized expert in development economics, a field that has been growing in prominence in recent years.

The field takes on questions that range from the pragmatic, such as the effectiveness of efforts to raise living standards, to deep questions of social theory, such as the root causes of famine. Its rise has been spurred by the proliferation and availability of data on individuals and households, as well as sweeping transformations in the world economy that have altered some fortunes but not others.

"The combination of an extreme affront to social justice, a compelling intellectual challenge and new tools and resources to tackle the issue makes development economics very attractive for new scholars," Udry says.

Udry has conducted extensive field research in West Africa, exploring areas such as technological change in agriculture; the use of financial markets, asset accumulation and gift exchange

to cope with risk; and gender relations and the structure of household economies.

At Northwestern, Udry is taking that work to a new level as he co-leads the University's Global Poverty Research Lab along with Kellogg School of Management economist **Dean Karlan**. The lab, a Buffett Institute initiative, uses the power of empirical evidence to address poverty and improve well-being in the developing world. It already hosts a research cluster in Ghana that tracks the long-term welfare of families, as well as novel projects on gender and economic behavior, social protection programs and the use of technology in agriculture.

"We want to take the lessons of our research and connect those ideas to policy debates around the world to effect change and improve lives," Udry says.

These efforts, along with the work of many of Udry's colleagues,

"put Northwestern well on its way to becoming a major hub in an international research network on economic development," says **Lawrence Christiano**, the Alfred W. Chase Professor and chair of the Department of Economics.

"The fact that many people on our planet continue to live in dire poverty is one of the major problems of our time," Christiano says. "Northwestern will become a significant player in this area of scholarship." ■

"I can't tolerate the idea of living in a world in which many parents have to make choices about which child receives enough food to eat."

CHRISTOPHER UDRY, *the Robert E. and Emily King Professor of Economics*

Christopher Udry (in turquoise shirt) and Dean Karlan (to his left) speak with farmers in Ghana.



DEVELOPMENT ECONOMICS AT NORTHWESTERN

A growing number of Northwestern faculty are working in this burgeoning field, a reflection of the University's heightened focus on global issues.

Learn more about their work: wcas.nu/csde

NEW LANGUAGES, NEW FRONTIERS

BY REBECCA LINDELL

If it's been several decades since you studied a foreign language at Northwestern, you might not recognize the language-learning classrooms of today. Students of Arabic converse onscreen with Syrian refugees on the other side of the world. Italian students gain fluency by writing, filming and starring in their own soap operas. A flashcard app helps students master German prepositions on their iPhones.

Technology has opened new avenues for the study of foreign languages, a revolution that has educators rethinking some of their most basic assumptions about how languages are taught. At the forefront of this effort is **Brian Edwards**, the Crown Professor in Middle East Studies and chair of the Weinberg College Language Initiative.

Edwards is in the midst of reviewing the College's approach to language study, a process that is likely to result in a bevy of new opportunities for students at all levels. Interdisciplinary language classes, inducements to continue language study beyond a basic level of proficiency, and new ways to incorporate international students into the foreign-language curriculum are just a few of the ideas being explored.

Edwards is well placed to make such recommendations. A speaker of four languages himself, he recently served on the American Academy of Arts and Sciences' Commission on Language Learning. The commission, which was charged by Congress to evaluate and recommend

changes to language education in the United States, issued an attention-getting report in February 2017.

"Studying a second language to a level beyond competence is one of the most effective ways to embrace complex thinking," Edwards says. "That moment when you actually start to *think* in a foreign language, as opposed to translating for yourself—something magical is happening.

"It's a shorthand, in a way, for what we do in the humanities, which is to teach different systems of thought. Language study allows you to do exactly that."

“That moment when you actually start to think in a foreign language, as opposed to translating for yourself—something magical is happening.”

BRIAN EDWARDS, *the Crown Professor in Middle East Studies*



Edwards's work takes place at what he acknowledges is a "fraught" moment, when enrollments in foreign-language classes nationwide are declining, even as higher education, business and society grow more global in nature.

Many Northwestern students end their foreign language study abruptly after gaining the level of proficiency required for graduation. Others never take a language class at Northwestern at all, having "placed out" as a result of their efforts in high school. But given the professional and intellectual benefits of continued study, Edwards says, they may be abandoning their language learning far too soon.

Extended foreign language study has been shown to yield impressive cognitive benefits, such as an improved aptitude in math and English. Bilingualism has even been shown to delay the onset of Alzheimer's disease. And in an increasingly global marketplace, a heightened fluency in a foreign language will provide a competitive edge.

"Americans are worse off if they are the only monolinguals in the room," Edwards says. "If they are negotiating with people who are bilingual while they are not, something is going to get missed."

One way to encourage students to continue their foreign language study is to offer upper-level classes in languages other than English. Most advanced language classes

focus on literature as the pinnacle of study. But why not offer a discussion section in Spanish for an upper-level philosophy course, perhaps, or a history course in French?

Encouraging students to pursue their research interests in another language would also counteract the trend of study-abroad programs taught entirely in English. "Political science and economics are taught in all languages of the world," Edwards notes. "Imagine what it would mean to study Russian politics in Russian at Moscow State University, or the history of the Middle East in Arabic at the University of Jordan. There's an opportunity to get to a very high level of fluency."

Ultimately, Edwards says, he hopes to inspire students to pursue language study throughout their time at Northwestern and beyond.

"Language study was something you may have done in middle school and high school, but college is the time when we can say, 'Now, we're going to show you how to do something really cool with that.' Or, 'You've learned one language—now take the opportunity to learn another one.' Because the ability to move between language systems is a level of higher-order thinking that will really allow students to thrive." ■

LANGUAGES
TAUGHT AT
NORTHWESTERN*

Arabic
Chinese
English
French
German
Greek (ancient)
Hebrew
Hindi-Urdu
Italian
Japanese
Korean
Latin
Persian
Polish
Portuguese
Russian
Spanish
Swahili
Tibetan
Turkish

*in 2017-18

One-Stop Shop for
Academic Support

From peer-guided study groups to tutoring, the University consolidates its many resources into a student-centered space in University Library.

Read more:
wcas.nu/asla

Your Baby Is Even
Smarter Than You Think

Three-month-olds can form abstract relations well before they learn language skills, Weinberg College psychology researchers find.

Read more:
wcas.nu/abstract-babies

Hands-on
Learning in Hawaii

For students in the College's "Race and Indigeneity in the Pacific" class, an eight-day trip to the island was an immersive experience in Native communities.

Read more:
wcas.nu/hands-on-in-hawaii

Kids Increasingly
Depict Scientists
as Female

Stereotypes that equate "science" with "men" have weakened over time, psychology Ph.D. student **David Miller** finds.

Read more:
wcas.nu/science-stereotypes

Faculty Garner
Prestigious Honors

A Guggenheim, the Harvey Prize and the American Academy of Arts and Letters Award are just a few of the recent awards bestowed on College faculty.

Read more:
wcas.nu/faculty-awards-2018

Meet the
ARCH Scholars

A suite of four programs set first-generation Weinberg College students on a path to academic success.

Watch video:
wcas.nu/arch-scholars

WHEN STUDENTS AND ALUMNI CONNECT

BY DANIEL P. SMITH

W

hen it's time to enter the working world, Weinberg College students possess two powerful advantages: a broad and transferable skill set, and a successful and devoted alumni network.

"The trick is getting students to believe the former, and to avail themselves of the latter," says **Jane Corey Holt**, director of the College's Austin J. Waldron Student-Alumni Connections Program.

The program works to drive both points home to students as they take their first steps into the professional arena. Through panel discussions, workshops and alumni-hosted "career treks" to organizations in a variety of sectors, students gain practical advice and the inspiration to pursue their unique career paths.

Key to the program's success is the participation of alumni like **Colleen (Hastings) Van Ham '94**, president and CEO of UnitedHealthcare of Illinois. Van Ham hosted students on a December 2015 career trek to discuss opportunities in the healthcare field. Her encouragement and candor had an inspirational effect on **Maggie Hoffman '18**, who took a major step forward on her own path after hearing about Van Ham's experiences.

That's the kind of thing that happens when students and alumni connect, Holt says. "When our students meet our alumni and learn about the varied and sometimes surprising career paths our graduates have taken, their anxiety gives way to excitement. And when our alumni insist that the skills they developed at the College—like clear communication, collaboration, critical thinking and a strong work ethic—have driven their success more than any particular course of study, students believe them. It's powerful!" ■

"When our students meet our alumni and learn about the varied and sometimes surprising career paths our graduates have taken, their anxiety gives way to excitement."

—JANE COREY HOLT, director, Austin J. Waldron Student-Alumni Connections Program

LEARN MORE ABOUT

the Austin J. Waldron Student-Alumni Connections Program:
wcas.nu/student-alumni-connections



MAGGIE HOFFMAN '18

Major: Economics

Career goal: Consulting

"For economics majors, it often feels like there are two common career paths—finance and consulting. But I was interested in a variety of possibilities, and I particularly wanted to find out how my academic background could translate into a career in healthcare. The career trek to UnitedHealthcare of Illinois gave me a chance to learn more about the field and to meet the alum leading the company.

After a tour of UnitedHealthcare's offices, Colleen talked to us candidly about the value of a liberal arts degree. Her answers were honest and genuine. She even mentioned that she had questioned whether she was ready to lead UnitedHealthcare.

She was grateful that her mentors and colleagues encouraged her and assured her that she was ready to lead.

At the time, I was deciding whether to pursue a leadership role in a student business group. Colleen's experience resonated with me. I'd initially been hesitant to apply, but after the trek I submitted my application immediately. I wrote a note to thank Colleen for her wisdom and guidance. She replied that it was natural to doubt ourselves, but that when others ask us to be a leader, it's because they already view us that way. We just have to reach that realization ourselves."

ILLUSTRATIONS: MARIA ZAHINA



COLLEEN (HASTINGS) VAN HAM '94

Major: Economics and international studies

Now: President and CEO, UnitedHealthcare of Illinois

"As an undergraduate, I'll readily admit I was befuddled. You see the engineering or pre-med students with a very defined path ahead of them. They seem to have it all figured out. As a liberal arts student, you're asking yourself, 'What am I? Where do I fit?' So I know how complex and pressure-filled these times can be, and that's precisely why I wanted to host the students at UnitedHealthcare.

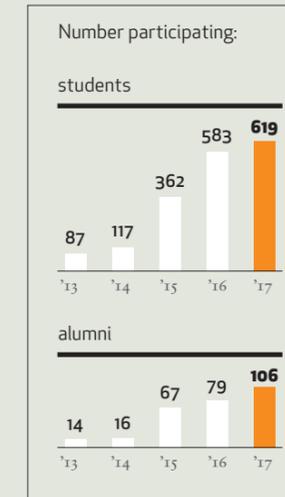
I recall one student asking me how I knew I was ready for the CEO role. I had to be candid. I didn't know. I thought I needed more time to prepare. Others saw it, though, and they encouraged me. Lo and behold, I was ready.

If someone had shared an experience like that with me when I was an undergraduate and assured me that I'd find my way and that I was armed with the skills to succeed, it would have relieved a lot of the pressure I was feeling. So receiving that note from Maggie and hearing that my experience had inspired her was immensely gratifying.

I wanted to reassure the students that they would find their own path. But I also wanted to encourage them to let the journey play out. Take something from every opportunity. Resist any feelings of disillusionment. Be a positive contributor. If you do these things, then the next thing will come. That's exactly what happened for me and what I believe will happen for many students as well."

The Power of Connection

Interest in the Austin J. Waldron Student-Alumni Connections Program is growing as students and alumni seek opportunities to connect with each other.



Since 2013, the program has hosted

80

EVENTS

29

CAREER TREKS

5

48

PANEL DISCUSSIONS

MOST POPULAR PANEL DISCUSSIONS

- I Majored in Neuroscience. Now What?
- Business Careers Beyond Finance and Consulting
- Careers for Global Thinkers
- Liberal Arts to Law
- Careers for Econ Majors Beyond Banking and Consulting

GET INVOLVED

Ready to connect with undergraduates? The Austin J. Waldron Student-Alumni Connections Program offers a variety of ways for alumni to engage with students.

Panels and roundtables

Share your career insights and thoughts about making the transition from undergraduate to working professional by taking part in an on-campus discussion.

Career treks

Host a visit to your organization and provide students with a firsthand look at your business and industry.

Skills coaching

Share your expertise in workshops crafted to highlight essential professional skills such as networking, job interviewing and resume preparation.

Ready to engage?

Contact Jane Corey Holt, director of the Austin J. Waldron Student-Alumni Connections Program, at jane-holt@northwestern.edu or call (847) 467-6628.

WHAT DOES “FREE SPEECH” MEAN ON A COLLEGE CAMPUS?

INTERVIEWS BY LISA STEIN

Ethan Busby
is a graduate student in political science.

My research focuses on different kinds of extremism based on ideological, social or racial divisions and how to inhibit it. This is a very difficult topic for college campuses to wrestle with, as it raises questions over different but important values. The first is the sense of openness, diversity and toleration that the First Amendment promotes, to which most of us have a strong attachment. The second is the sense that some views are normatively bad—and deciding which ones are bad is never easy. Any time you draw a line, immediately there are questions and you have to make lots of exceptions. If a group challenges democracy, should you make an exception and take action against that group?

It's not always clear which standards to use to evaluate if someone or something is unacceptable. If there's a threat of violent conflict, there could be reasons to stop the event. But otherwise, how much of my decision about what's acceptable is mostly about my views versus objective standards of free speech?

Being able to wrestle with this is more important than having one clear rule. **The boundary between being challenged and marginalized is a hard one to draw.** I believe some ideas can cause psychological distress, but pretending that we're only going to hear viewpoints that we agree with is a fantasy. Neither side of the political spectrum has a corner on intolerance—they're just intolerant about different things. On any campus, we don't need to ask, “Are we a tolerant student body?” Rather, what we should be asking is, **“In what way can we struggle with intolerance?”** Dealing with this is inescapable.

Joseph Lamps '19 is a Weinberg College philosophy major.

Free speech on a college campus means that **any opinion can be voiced and evaluated on its own merits.** The most important function of free speech is to protect the voices of those with unpopular opinions, or those with opinions disliked by people with power. This applies on the level of the campus, where **no opinion should be prohibited or silenced**, and on the level of national and state governments, which need to be prevented from attempting to silence any opinions. Free speech is tied closely to the right to protest peacefully, because protest is a form of expression. An environment of ideological diversity in which facts are valued above ideology bolsters free speech.

Laura Beth Nielsen
is a sociology professor and director
of the Center for Legal Studies.

In the United States, we value free speech and have this idea that “sticks and stones may break my bones but names will never hurt me.” But perhaps it's too dismissive to characterize the harms of certain types of speech as nothing more than an emotional scratch.

Medical and social sciences have shown that some speech can have serious consequences—such as high blood pressure, depression and coping actions such as smoking—that can prevent a person from being a full, equal participant in education. **We're not just talking about people being touchy, but about inequalities that have befuddled us as a country for a long time.** Why do African Americans have shorter lifespans? Maybe because they have increased stress. As those connections get made and our society becomes more diverse, we may decide that words can actually hurt in significant ways.

How will we deal with this on campuses? Colleges and universities promote free speech and academic freedom even though the law does allow for criminalization of speech intended to intimidate or promote physical harm. But there's a lot more we can do to help students through these conflicts. Discussions about political divisions and policy issues—the kinds of things we should be talking about on campuses—require excellent leadership and opportunities for people to speak and be heard.

We want our students to feel safe to express their ideas on campus, and we want a diversity of opinions to be represented. We want students to enjoy their First Amendment right to protest, but we can't have people shutting down classrooms because they're offended. **Most students are new to these disagreements and conversations. We have to teach them.**

Alvin B. Tillery, Jr. is the director of the Center for the Study of Diversity and Democracy and an associate professor of political science.

I do think that the First Amendment freedoms of speech and expression are sacrosanct. I agree with Justice Harlan Fiske Stone that the First Amendment is one of the foundational freedoms that make executing other freedoms possible. I think also that the tenure system and the ability to pursue lines of research without worrying about the bottom line of an institution are very important. Without those protections, there's no academic freedom or pursuit of real science. They are the cornerstone of pursuing truth, and that's what universities are supposed to be about.

Problems arise when speakers on campus advocate for ideas based on emotion rather than scholarship and research. You could say, “It's discomfiting, and the university is supposed to discomfit young minds when they arrive.” The important thing is that those young minds encounter discourse that is driven by standards of academic research. You can't just state something like “the earth is flat” or “climate change isn't real” or any other position without defending it. ■



INTER(ior) View

BY REBECCA LINDELL

A new front against cancer

Cancer is a cunning foe. It can behave so insidiously that the drugs used to fight it can land wide of the mark, damaging healthier tissues as well. But what if that medicine could be introduced with pinpoint accuracy into the very heart of a tumor? And what if, once delivered, the drug could work with spy-like stealth to fulfill its lifesaving mission? Such is the vision of Northwestern's Ronald and JoAnne Willens Center for Nano Oncology. Housed within Northwestern's International Institute for Nanotechnology (IIN), the center connects Weinberg College scientists with McCormick School engineers and Feinberg School of Medicine researchers to develop innovative new therapies for the most aggressive cancers. Nanoparticles may be unfathomably small, notes IIN director **Chad Mirkin**, the Weinberg College chemistry professor who also leads the Willens Center. "But the potential for using them in the fight against cancer," he says, "is vast."

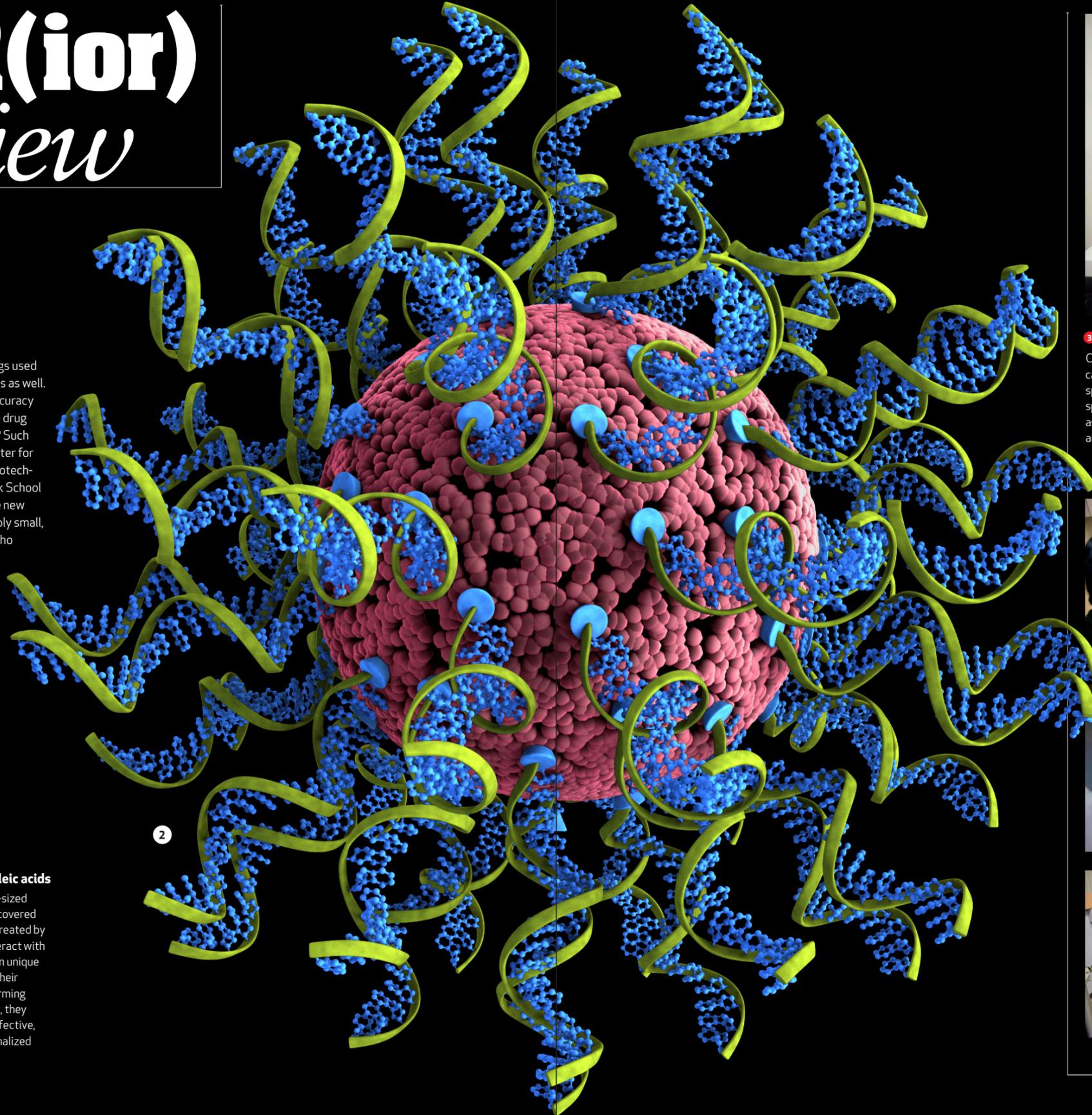


1 Helpers of humanity

The center was launched with a \$10 million gift from longtime Northwestern supporters **Ronald and JoAnne Willens**. "It's our desire to improve, grow and contribute to making the world better," JoAnne Willens says. "We are grateful for that opportunity."

2 Spherical nucleic acids

SNAs are tiny, nano-sized structures densely covered with DNA or RNA. Created by Mirkin, they can interact with biological systems in unique ways and maintain their stability without harming patients. As a result, they can deliver highly effective, targeted and personalized cancer treatments.



3 A nano-sized "Trojan horse"

Chemistry professor **Nathan Gianneschi** (above right) is developing nanoscale capsules that disguise anti-cancer drugs so that they appear, from the tumor's perspective, to be part of the tumor itself. Once accepted by the tumor, the nanoparticles spring open to form a network structure within the tumor tissue. This network serves as a depot of drugs, which leak into the tumor and stay there—reducing side effects and improving the effectiveness of anti-cancer medicine.



4 Taking aim at glioblastoma

A promising new SNA drug offers new hope in the fight against this notoriously aggressive brain cancer. Developed by Mirkin and Feinberg professor **Alexander Stegh** (left), it diminishes the ability of glioblastoma cells to divide. It is now undergoing human clinical trials, led by **Priya Kumthekar, MD** (right).



5 Coaching the immune system

By loading SNAs with antigens, researchers working under Feinberg professor **Bin Zhang, MD** are creating nanoparticles that selectively train the immune system to destroy cancer cells.



6 Big microscope, tiny specimens

A towering electron microscope allows researchers to view specimens that are less than .1 nanometer in size—smaller than a single hydrogen atom. Engineered especially for cancer research, the microscope is a boon to researchers working to develop nano vaccines.

THE SCHOLAR RESURRECTED

BY LISA STEIN

One of **Aldon Morris**'s earliest memories of his childhood in rural Tutwiler, Miss., was the lynching of Emmett Till, whose body was dumped in the nearby Tallahatchie River.

Till, a 14-year-old Chicagoan visiting Mississippi, had paid with his life for an unfounded accusation in 1955 that he had flirted with a white woman.

"I had nightmares," recalls Morris, who was 6 at the time. "I couldn't sleep, thinking about what it would be like to be left in a river to die."

Till's murder wasn't the only injustice haunting Morris. Throughout his childhood in the Mississippi Delta of the 1950s—the heartland of Jim Crow racism—Morris experienced painful inequities.

"Starting in kindergarten, we had to use the hand-me-down, torn-up books of white students, so we knew we weren't considered important," Morris says. "To make ends meet, we received second-rate cheese from the government, and we had to drink from 'colored' water fountains. Everything around us reinforced the idea that we were different, we were less."



Above: Bryant's Grocery, site of the alleged flirting that led to Emmett Till's death in 1955.

Opposite: Aldon Morris, the Leon Forrest Professor of Sociology and African American Studies



PHOTO: ROB HART

PHOTO: FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

The future sociologist struggled to make sense of these profound disparities, beginning what would become his life's work as a scholar of race and social inequality. He and others in his generation would come to be known as "the Emmett Till generation" for the galvanizing effect the tragedy had on their commitment to the civil rights movement.

Today, Morris is Northwestern's Leon Forrest Professor of Sociology and African American Studies. His hardscrabble upbringing has lent him a rare perspective in academia, where he has relentlessly studied the dynamics of discrimination and the motivation of black people to resist oppression.

In April, Morris was recognized with the John D. McCarthy Award for Lifetime Achievement from the Center for the Study of Social Movements at the University of Notre Dame. The award cemented Morris's legacy as a scholar of remarkable breadth and a mentor to subsequent generations of researchers.

Indeed, Morris's most recent book, *The Scholar Denied: W.E.B. Du Bois and the Birth of Modern Sociology* (University of California Press, 2015), has been credited with redefining the very underpinnings of sociology. In the book, Morris argues that

Du Bois—an African-American scholar, civil rights activist and writer—was the de facto founder of American sociology in the early 20th century, even though his achievements were systematically buried by the academic establishment.

"This book is not just a book, but a book designed to make changes in how sociology works, so that sociology can make changes in the way society works," says Michael Schwartz, sociology professor emeritus at Stony Brook University and one of Morris's early mentors.

ARRIVAL IN THE "PROMISED LAND"

At one point in Morris's life, such a legacy would have seemed unlikely.

When he was 13, Morris moved to Chicago to join his mother in the all-black section of the Morgan Park neighborhood on the South Side, eager to experience what blacks in the South considered the "Promised Land."

What he found on his arrival was something altogether different.

Venturing into all-white neighborhoods, Morris and his brother Freddie encountered violence. "Shouts of 'niggers go home' and physical aggression by white gangs became familiar," Morris recalls. "I soon realized that being north of the Mason-Dixon line

meant only that discrimination was more subtle and sometimes hidden."

The Morris boys attended the predominantly white Morgan Park High School, where they and other black students "weren't expected to achieve much," Morris says. "We were not counseled to think about college, and I didn't really have many professional expectations."

After graduation, Morris found jobs in Chicago factories, where he worked throughout the 1960s. Watching and reading news reports about the burgeoning civil rights movement in the South, he was moved by the fearless oration of Martin Luther King Jr. and the willingness of Southern blacks to protest publicly despite vicious attacks by police dogs and high-powered water hoses.

"I understood racial segregation, the humiliation of having to go to the back of the bus, to have your grandparents referred to as 'Boy' and 'Auntie.' I understood it all in a very personal way," Morris remembers.

If it weren't for the urging of a co-worker to enroll at a community college, Morris might have stayed on as a stock boy at the Spiegel warehouse. But at 18, Morris registered at Southeast Community College, despite fearing that others would laugh at him. As a young black male, "you generate

"I found great inspiration from Du Bois and wanted to be able to express myself with the power and eloquence he had. Reading him was personally empowering. I thought, 'If a black man at the dawn of the 20th century could do this, why couldn't I?'"

—Aldon Morris

As a young scholar, Morris vowed to one day shine a light on the contributions of W.E.B. Du Bois. Morris's groundbreaking book *The Scholar Denied* was published in 2015.

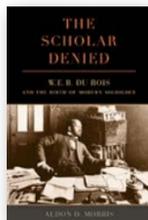


PHOTO: COLLEEN FITZGERALD

PHOTO: LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



Redefining Sociology: W.E.B. Du Bois

Like Aldon Morris, W.E.B. Du Bois (1868–1963) believed that scholarship could promote racial equality. And unlike his contemporary, Booker T. Washington, Du Bois was not willing to compromise, and he challenged white racism head-on throughout his life.

The descendant of northern free blacks, Du Bois grew up in Massachusetts and showed intellectual promise early on. He earned bachelor's degrees from Fisk and Harvard universities and was the first African-American to receive a doctorate from Harvard.

Du Bois's trip to Europe in 1892 to pursue a Ph.D. from the University of Berlin proved life-changing. There, he learned to incorporate empirical research—including sophisticated statistical analyses—into his studies. This approach contrasted with the new field of American sociology, whose practitioners tended to rely on qualitative methods and to regard blacks as inferior to whites.

When Du Bois returned home, he applied his newfound methods to studies of American communities, providing empirical evidence that it was systematic oppression—rather than inherent inadequacy—that kept black people disenfranchised and exploited economically.

Du Bois wrote numerous nonfiction books and novels, helped found the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and developed the first scientific school of sociology at Atlanta University.

Although Du Bois was never accepted by the elite academics of his day, today his scholarship is highly regarded, widely cited and the inspiration for several biographies over the last few decades.

all these great mythologies about what college is. You come to see it as something that is out of reach and not for you," he recalls. "But when I started community college, I recognized that I was as smart and capable as anybody there, and that was a revelation."

"WHY COULDN'T I?"

Morris truly thrived in the academic setting. His favorite class was led by a black professor from the South who introduced him to Du Bois's story and his historic confrontation with the conservative educator Booker T. Washington over the most effective routes to black liberation.

Morris dived into Du Bois's masterpiece *The Souls of Black Folk*, his poetry, his sociological research and his fiction. He came to see himself in Du Bois, a fellow black man who worked to change the injustice around him through scholarship.

"I found great inspiration from Du Bois and wanted to be able to express myself with the power and eloquence he had. Reading him was personally empowering. I thought, 'If a black man at the dawn of the 20th century could do this, why couldn't I?'"

His professors encouraged Morris to continue his studies at Bradley University in Peoria, Ill., where he excelled but was disappointed that none of his classes included Du Bois's works. He quickly earned his bachelor's degree, and again several professors pushed him to pursue a doctorate in sociology, guiding him through the graduate school application process.

Morris went on to Stony Brook University, where he saw once more a lack of scholarship on Du Bois and promised himself that one day he would help right that wrong. He researched how black activists ignited the 1960s civil rights movement and wrote his dissertation on the topic. His scholarship culminated in the book *The Origins of the Civil Rights Movement* (Simon and Schuster, 1984), which made him famous in social movement circles.

With his Ph.D. in hand, Morris joined the sociology department at the University of Michigan in 1980. In 1988, he arrived at Northwestern, where he has since served as chair of the sociology department as well as the interim dean of Weinberg College.

"It's funny—I had never considered being an academic," Morris says. "I went to grad school because I believed there were some fundamental laws of social change, and that once you learned them you could go back to your community and implement them."

TWO SCHOLAR-ACTIVISTS

In the end, Morris decided to continue his life in academia as a kind of activism through which to bring about change—an idea that Du Bois himself had embraced.

In fact, the two scholars share strong similarities. Du Bois had wanted to challenge the injustice around him not only through scholarship, but also as a mentor to young scholars inspired by his use of science in sociology to discredit notions of white supremacy. Morris, too, has encouraged legions of students to research the history and ongoing pursuit of civil rights, including his former student Belinda Robnett, author of *How Long? How Long? African-American Women in the Struggle for Civil Rights* (Oxford University Press, 1997).

"Morris is the quintessential scholar-activist," observes Pamela Oliver, a social movement scholar at the University of Wisconsin–Madison. "He has always sought to use whatever position he had to advance the awareness and inclusion of scholars of color and others who are often marginalized within sociology and the larger society."

Morris also collaborates with younger scholars in the field, such as Crystal Fleming, a sociologist at Stony Brook with whom Morris recently co-authored a journal article on the ways people are using new technologies to combat racial injustice.

Fleming says Morris has had an enormous influence on their discipline.

"When I first started teaching seven years ago, I would include Du Bois's work and commentary about its significance," she says. "But nobody had a book like *The Scholar Denied*. It has given me a conduit to teach about Du Bois's work and also how sociology was founded, who founded it, what the racial politics were, how much has changed, and how much hasn't changed."

"This book has made a significant impact on the teaching of sociology."

These days, Morris is working on an encyclopedia of Du Bois's social scientific works that will provide more insight into the scholar who helped inspire Morris's own success story.

"I feel blessed to achieve what I have," Morris says. "My story demonstrates that serendipity, opportunities and mentorship are crucial to achievement. The community where I came from and all my mentors and teachers over the years played a big role in my development. They're like rivers that run from different places into me." ■



THE ART & SCIENCE OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP

PHOTOS BY ROB HART

FOR STUDENTS WITH
A BUSINESS IDEA,
AN INTERDISCIPLINARY
MINDSET PROVIDES
A CRITICAL EDGE

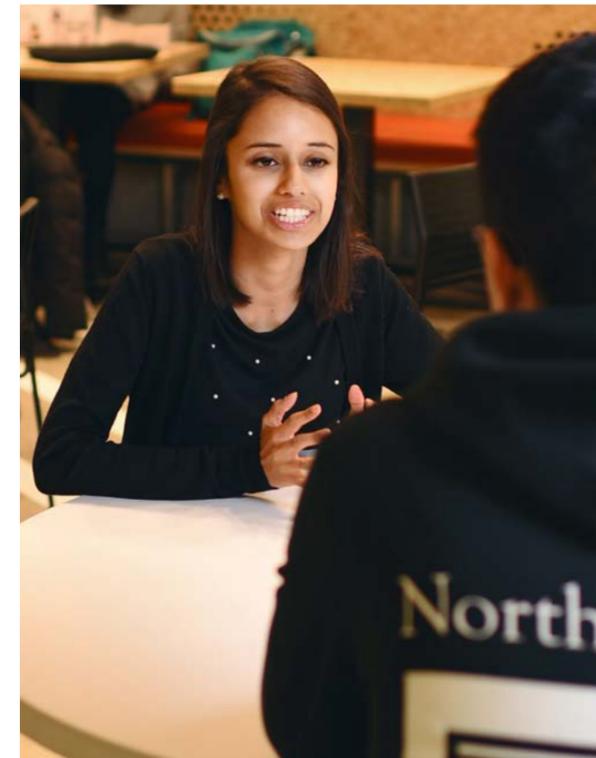
BY ERIN PETERSON

Two summers ago, **Sarah Ahmad '18** was doing an internship in the greater Chicago area. Every weekend, as a treat, she and her friends would travel into the city to try a new restaurant. Ahmad wanted to make the most out of every experience, so she tirelessly researched her options—only to discover that her diligent efforts led to hit-or-miss results. She could go to a well-reviewed restaurant and still get a meal that was a dud. Or she could find a hidden gem of a dish tucked in the menu of an otherwise so-so spot. It was in those moments that HotPlate was born. “I just wanted to know: what should I order?” Ahmad says. She dreamed of an app that would rate specific dishes at restaurants, not just the restaurants themselves. Ahmad, who is majoring in economics and integrated engineering studies, returned to Northwestern in the fall inspired to address that need. She enrolled in a course called Engineering Entrepreneurship, where HotPlate was just one of six ideas that she and her classmates developed in the class. She followed that up with the Wildfire Pre-Accelerator program at The Garage, Northwestern’s hub for student entrepreneurship (see page 25).

And now the smartphone app is in the wild. It currently boasts hundreds of users and individual dish reviews for dozens of Evanston restaurants. Better yet, Ahmad knows that she and her team are just getting started.

Ahmad’s creation may be rooted in technology, but the problems she and her team seek to resolve are all about human nature. “There are so many things people are asking for. Can they text their friend through the app? Get chef recommendations? Can there be other social features?” she says. “But what people *think* they want and what they *actually* want are two different things. And they don’t even necessarily know for themselves what they want. That’s the most difficult part.”

That’s when Ahmad finds herself drawing on her background in the social sciences, including her economics and political science classes. “It’s so important to have empathy for your users, and the social science part of my degree is good at teaching that,” she says.



“We learned in economics, for example, that the things that you would logically *think* should happen are often not what actually happen. When you’re building something, it’s not just about coding it. Real people will use it! So you’ve got to understand social sciences and human interaction.”

Applying human understanding to whiz-bang technology is an approach championed by Northwestern University President **Morton Schapiro** and Slavic languages and literatures professor **Gary Saul Morson**, co-authors of *Cents and Sensibility: What Economics Can Learn from the Humanities* (Princeton University Press, 2017). “Creating a product or service that people want to buy requires emotional intelligence,” Schapiro says. “Having soft skills as well as the hard skills helps make people much better entrepreneurs.”

A background in the liberal arts might not be regarded as essential for an entrepreneurial career. But perhaps it should be. The arts and sciences bring to bear a range of skills, including creative problem-solving, strong communication and the ability to learn new things, that are critical for any entrepreneur. These skills can help transform a good idea into a great one and a so-so company into a successful one. And these companies lead to innovation, jobs and economic growth.

Students and alumni at every entrepreneurial stage—from those with the spark of an idea, to those expanding a company, to those exiting successfully—say the mindset fostered by the arts and sciences has provided a crucial edge.

Above: Sarah Ahmad '18, founder of HotPlate

Opposite: Through lectures and other activities at The Garage, Weinberg College students learn how to bring their business ideas to life.



That was the starting point for Care Package, a service that delivers a box of snacks—a rotating selection of items from cookies and pretzels to oatmeal and gum—right to students' doors. While they have stayed true to that fundamental idea, Kim and his team have made plenty of changes in their efforts to hurdle pricing and business-model barriers.

Kim says the problems he solves as a math and physics major aren't so different from the ones he wrestles with in his business. "I like learning how to solve complex problems—breaking them down and really understanding what's going on," he says. "In physics, for example, you learn how to solve systems without friction—but the reality is that *everything* has friction. When experimenting, you learn what happens in the real world. The same is true with a business idea. You start with an idea, but then you have to see what happens in real life."

For example, Kim and his team initially imagined Care Package as a subscription for which students would pay \$15 to get a box of treats worth \$30 delivered to their dorm room every two weeks. That model fizzled, so they tested other options until hitting on a winner. Today, students use Venmo, a smartphone-based payment service, to send \$5 to the Care Package team. Within 30 minutes, a Care Package delivery person will bring snacks to their door.

Kim and his team currently sell about 15 boxes a week, and they expect that number to rise when they expand their delivery area from two dorms to three. They dream of developing a tool that doesn't just make it easy to deliver snacks to students, but also helps companies solve the "last mile" problem of getting goods to customers efficiently.

Reconceiving problems is an essential skill that arts and sciences graduates bring to the entrepreneurial sphere, says **Billy Banks '98**. A history and political science major, Banks started and ran multiple companies before he became The Garage's associate director in 2016.

"Entrepreneurship is about being comfortable with risk uncertainty," Banks says, noting that he navigated many white-knuckle moments himself while leading M-Tech, a steel fabrication business. Banks credits his own ability to absorb lots of information—and to make difficult decisions in the face of ambiguous or even conflicting reports—in part to his liberal arts education. "Part of that [approach] is about reframing failure, synthesizing new information from disparate sources and drawing new conclusions," he says.

Entrepreneurs, like arts and sciences students, love to look at problems from many different angles and find the unexpected perspective that can provide the insight to solve them.

"WHEN EXPERIMENTING, YOU LEARN WHAT HAPPENS IN THE REAL WORLD. THE SAME IS TRUE WITH A BUSINESS IDEA. YOU START WITH AN IDEA, BUT THEN YOU HAVE TO SEE WHAT HAPPENS IN REAL LIFE."



SAM KIM '20,
co-founder, Care Package

1. Start

RETHINK EVERYTHING

SAM KIM '20 is a born entrepreneur. He launched an apparel company in seventh grade, worked for his dad's startup in high school, and is running three businesses out of The Garage, Northwestern's student innovation incubator. When he arrived at Northwestern in 2016, it wasn't long before he discovered Launch, a student-run program that helps move students from the ideation stage to a product that's ready for funding.

As part of the program, Kim and his friends kicked around an idea to help local farmers sell fresh produce to local restaurants. When doing market research proved too challenging, they thought a little closer to home. "Through interviews, we realized that students don't have a lot of snacks in their room," he says, swiftly moving into a perfectly honed elevator pitch. "I started to think: How could we eliminate the struggle of going to a basement vending machine or all the way down to CVS? When it's a cold day, I don't want to have to go through five doors and up and down three flights of stairs to spend \$5 on two things."



2. Scale

BUILD MEANINGFUL CONNECTIONS

EVAN TAYLOR '19 was flying home from a family trip to Mexico two years ago when he saw his mom pull a small stack of pesos from her purse. Because the pesos were mostly coins that a currency exchange wouldn't accept, that money—the equivalent of perhaps \$10 or so—would essentially be useless once they arrived in the United States.

Even after Taylor, an economics and international studies major, returned home, he couldn't stop thinking about the problem. So he did a little research and made a few calculations. Some conservative, back-of-the-napkin math revealed the true scope of the opportunity: some 11 million Chicago-area airport travelers likely hauled home nearly \$100 million in foreign currency that would never leave their sock drawer.

Taylor's determination to prevent that money from going to waste became the genesis of Community Currency, a nonprofit organization that collects leftover foreign currency at airports and other locations and transforms it into scholarships for underprivileged children.

As he built the organization, Taylor soon discovered that his biggest hurdles were not the ones he had anticipated—launching a nonprofit organization, for example, or finding a company that would pay scrap prices for metal coins. His most important challenge was finding other groups to buy into his vision and help support it.

To do that, Taylor found himself returning again and again to the principles he'd learned in his first-year writing course with **Barbara Shwom**, a professor of instruction in the College's Cook Family Writing Program. In Shwom's course, *How to Become an Expert in Roughly 10 Weeks*, Taylor had learned how to deeply research and understand topics—and to convince others of the value of his views. This proved to be a critical skill when Taylor went into meetings and faced sharp and unexpected questions.

Whether he was meeting with the Chicago Department of Aviation (which could help the company get placements in airports) or the Boys & Girls Club (which would get the funds from the work to support scholarships), Taylor sought to help the other party see the value of his vision. He worked to develop clear, concise answers to every question they could throw his way.

Much of the work happened long before he and his team entered the meeting room. "It was about reasoning through the questions people were going to ask—what are the weaknesses and the arguments for something," he says. "It was about understanding that you always have to be flexible and creative about how to solve problems."

Shwom, who has kept in touch with Taylor as Community Currency has grown to a team of 12, is delighted that he has been able to put the ideas from her class to work.

"We did a lot of work on persuasion in the course," she says. "Being persuasive is not about browbeating someone to agree with you. It's about being able to frame what you're doing in a way that makes sense to other people and gets them on board."

So far, Taylor has been able to generate enormous enthusiasm for his company's mission: they've landed \$20,000 in grant funding, partnered with the local chapter of the Boys & Girls Club, connected with multiple on-campus groups, and are in the midst of encouraging discussions with the Department of Aviation at O'Hare International Airport.

Next up, he says, are talks with banks and currency exchanges.

"BEING PERSUASIVE IS NOT ABOUT BROWBEATING SOMEONE TO AGREE WITH YOU. IT'S ABOUT BEING ABLE TO FRAME WHAT YOU'RE DOING IN A WAY THAT MAKES SENSE TO OTHER PEOPLE AND GETS THEM ON BOARD."



BARBARA SHWOM,
professor of instruction,
Cook Family Writing
Program



3. Sell

SEE THE BIGGER PICTURE

BEN WEISS '17 (above right) had been obsessed with college football recruiting for years. He'd even landed a student job in exactly that area for Northwestern. But it was in an economics classroom, not a recruiting office, that he saw recruiting's next big thing.

As part of his coursework for Schapiro and Morson's team-taught class, Alternatives: Modeling Choice Across the Disciplines, Weiss had read a Schapiro-authored paper about algorithms designed to predict the likelihood that a given student would enroll at a particular college. Such algorithms are essential, since schools always admit more people than they can accept, knowing that not everyone will actually enroll.

To Weiss, it felt like a thunderclap: why not use those same principles to develop an algorithm that could predict where a student-athlete would commit? Though he didn't have the kind of technology background he suspected he'd need to develop the software, Weiss was pretty sure he could track down people who did. A fraternity brother, **Danny Baker '17**, did some of the analytic number-crunching, and a pair of College computer science students, **Dino Mujkic '17** and **Gautier Dagan '17**, helped build the platform for the technology. The result was Zcruit, an

application that predicts whether a student will commit to a particular school with incredible 94 percent accuracy—along with several eager university customers.

Weiss's successful approach demonstrates the value of bringing diverse viewpoints into a group—something that happens often in the interdisciplinary arts and sciences. "Cognitive diversity—making sure that not everyone on your team thinks like you—can help people build stronger teams," Banks says. "You're more likely to challenge assumptions and look at a problem through different lenses. And that's one way to help make sure that the best ideas win."

That 360-degree mindset wasn't just helpful in getting Zcruit off the ground. It also proved invaluable when Weiss was selling the startup to Reigning Champs, a company that helps connect athletes to colleges. The company now works with 23 Division I football programs, including Clemson, USC, Notre Dame and LSU.

Weiss knew he and his team had taken Zcruit as far as it could go on their own. Reigning Champs offered Weiss the chance to work within a larger and more diverse infrastructure, with services for student-athletes, coaches and administrators. That meant Zcruit would fit into Reigning Champs like a puzzle piece, connecting to other services and maximizing its impact. "We built an amazing foundation at Northwestern and now we're trying to transition into the next stage with the new team, to build out a better product and go from there," he says.

If there is a lesson to be drawn from Weinberg College students and alumni who have built unique and successful businesses, it's that the arts and sciences mindset isn't just worthwhile. It's essential.

Boundary-crossing thinking can lead to that "eureka!" moment, as when Weiss saw an admissions algorithm and dreamed up a way to apply it to recruiting. Deep research and careful case-building can help bold creators find partners who can turn an idea into reality, as Taylor did with Community Currency. And the liberal arts' emphasis on true empathy, not just the bottom line, can help entrepreneurs transform ideas like HotPlate and Care Package into genuinely useful and loved products and services.

Perhaps most important, the arts and sciences give students the tools to learn whatever they need to tackle next, whether that's reading a balance sheet or navigating a legal agreement. They encourage students to look at the world in unique ways. And through entrepreneurship, they can take that distinctive point of view and transform it into a company that can make a difference.

"The liberal arts," says Schapiro, "give you the background to look at all types of difficult problems and find ways to understand and solve them."

"COGNITIVE DIVERSITY—MAKING SURE THAT NOT EVERYONE ON YOUR TEAM THINKS LIKE YOU—CAN HELP PEOPLE BUILD STRONGER TEAMS. THAT'S ONE WAY TO HELP MAKE SURE THAT THE BEST IDEAS WIN."

BILLY BANKS '98,
associate director of
The Garage



THE GARAGE AT NORTHWESTERN

The founders of Apple, Amazon and Disney all famously got their start in garages. These days, Northwestern student entrepreneurs have their own garage to call home. The Garage, which opened in 2015, is an 11,000-square-foot space housed, appropriately enough, in the North Campus Parking Garage. There, students can seek advice from professionals, get involved in pre-accelerator programs, attend talks and events, and collaborate to build the company of their dreams.

The Garage currently houses about 60 student-founded startups per academic quarter. "We welcome students from every school and discipline," says **Melissa Kaufman**, executive director of The Garage. "And success looks different for everyone. For some, it's really about building the skills of resiliency, networking and leadership. And some will get funding and get acquired."

RESOURCES FOR STUDENT ENTREPRENEURS

Wildfire Pre-Accelerator

This 10-week program helps entrepreneurs learn the basics of product development, pitching and customer connection. At the end of the program, students pitch their ideas in a Shark Tank-type event with expert judges, where a \$10,000 prize pool of cash is up for grabs.

Launch

This crash course in entrepreneurship, run by students and supported by The Garage, is designed to help students go from back-of-the-napkin sketches to real products that are ready for crowdfunding or venture capital investments.

Office Hours

Student entrepreneurs can schedule dedicated time with successful entrepreneurs, tax and accounting experts, social media and marketing professionals, and other mentors.

Spaces

In addition to co-working spaces and conference rooms, students can take advantage of the Makerspace, with an augmented reality and virtual reality lab as well as a prototyping lab.

The Garage Residency

Student entrepreneurs can apply to be part of a selective residency program that offers weekly dinners, 24/7 access to The Garage, and a mentor. ■

Ben Knight '98
pursues his art
while managing a
restaurant business
and co-starring in
a TV series

BY ELIZABETH BLACKWELL



Juggling three restaurants, a filming schedule and six-year-old twins doesn't leave **Ben Knight** much time for art.

But the English major-turned-painter-turned-restaurant manager has always embraced his eclectic interests. And that's a good thing, because even Knight could not have anticipated that one day he'd co-star in a public television series as well.

Knight's path to *A Chef's Life*, the PBS documentary and cooking series that recently finished its fifth season, began in 1994, when he enrolled at Northwestern as an aspiring biomedical engineer.

It seemed like a logical step, since he'd aced his math and science classes in high school. But when a friend recommended Professor **Gary Saul Morson's** long-running Russian literature class, Knight realized what he'd been missing.

"What I really wanted was to read and write and think critically about life," Knight says. So he transferred to Weinberg College and switched his major to English literature.

**WHAT DID
YOU DO WITH
YOUR ARTS
AND SCIENCES
DEGREE?**

**Brenda Darden
Wilkerson '85**
works to expand
opportunities for
women and minorities
in the technology field

BY DANIEL P. SMITH



Brenda Darden Wilkerson's ears still ring with the words of history professor **Henry Binford**, who opined that the work we do contributes to the environment in which we live.

"That was the moment I realized I wanted to see the broader perspectives in the world so that I could add to people's lives," says Wilkerson, a computer studies major.

Since then, Wilkerson has sought to understand both technology and people, applying both left- and right-brain thinking to her study of each realm. She has also reflected on her own status as a relative rarity—an African-American woman working in technology—and has emerged as a champion for underrepresented populations in the tech field.

"I found tech to be increasingly sidelining different perspectives, and that didn't sit well with me," Wilkerson says.

After graduating from Northwestern in 1985, Wilkerson worked as a programmer and then as a software developer before entering the education field. Serving as director of IT training in continuing

In March 1982, a mob attacked the U.S. consulate in Bombay, India, to protest American arms sales to Pakistan. The rioters burned cars and smashed windows before the police restored order.

The consul general was away, so in the shocked silence of the aftermath, the question of what to do next lay with a young second-in-command. "Everyone was standing around waiting for me to make a decision," recalls **John Malott**. "They wanted leadership."

The Northwestern graduate moved quickly, closing the consulate for only a day while the burned cars were moved and the windows repaired. "We needed to show that we would not be intimidated," Malott says.

Not a typical day on the job, but in a volatile world not really unusual either. Malott's 32-year career as a foreign-service officer immersed him in demanding assignments throughout Asia, from wartime Vietnam to Malaysia, where he served as ambassador from 1995 to 1998.

John Malott '67
has led a life of
public service as a
U.S. diplomat to Asia

BY DAN LASKIN



PHOTOS: BAXTER MILLER, ANITAB.ORG, JOHN MALOTT

After graduation, Knight, who had always enjoyed painting, changed paths again. He signed up for graduate courses at the Art Institute of Chicago and began to explore the possibility of pursuing art professionally. "I just fell in love with making things," he says.

Knight's passion for art led him to New York, where he worked with artist Larry Poons and began selling his own paintings. To pay the bills, he also took a side job at Voyage, a West Village eatery. It was there that he met (and went on to marry) chef Vivian Howard, who was pursuing her own dream of opening a restaurant in her hometown of Kinston, N.C. Knight agreed to be part of the opening staff, thinking he'd soon be back to painting after the restaurant took off.

It didn't happen quite that way.

Despite early financial struggles, Chef & the Farmer became a regional success story. Howard has been nominated multiple

times as best chef in the Southeast by the James Beard Foundation Awards, and Knight is now the general manager of a three-restaurant business.

To build on their growing success, Howard approached PBS with the concept for *A Chef's Life*. The show, which follows Howard as she works with suppliers and her family, gives viewers a realistic glimpse into what it takes to run a farm-to-table restaurant. "The show is entirely true to life," Knight says. "I'm the resident curmudgeon."

Knight still paints whenever possible in his backyard studio and shows his work in local galleries. An English degree, he says, can be surprisingly relevant for someone with a multifaceted career.

"The literature courses I took exposed me to a level of articulation and quality that became a foundation for how I approach my business," he says. "I learned how to express myself and how to think in depth, and those are qualities that have really served me well." ■

education at one of Chicago's City Colleges, Wilkerson grew concerned as she saw many students—particularly women, minorities and low-income students—dissuaded from entering the tech arena.

"There was no reason why many of these folks couldn't find their way into technology," she says.

Recognizing an opportunity to address the root of the problem, Wilkerson assumed a leadership role with Chicago Public Schools, where the IT curriculum was languishing, she says, and the misconceptions about which students could handle technology ran deep.

Wilkerson soon became a "one-woman advocacy machine" for democratizing computer science education at CPS. She persuaded the district to invest more in technology education and marshalled an army of allies—teachers, administrators and external partners—to infuse IT into the curriculum. She also pushed to make computer science a high school graduation requirement at CPS, which became the first school district in the nation to do so.

"I saw too many people missing out on amazing opportunities, and I saw the tech field missing out on what these same people could bring," Wilkerson says.

Now, the Kansas City native and mother of four is embracing a new adventure.

In 2017, Wilkerson was named president and CEO of AnitaB.org, a Silicon Valley-based nonprofit that advocates for women technologists. In her new position, Wilkerson is working to empower women to assume roles in technology and to guide companies to cultivate a more diverse culture.

It's her latest effort to foster a world in which the people who create technology mirror those who use it.

"The whole purpose of tech isn't to make cool gadgets but to solve problems for people," she says. "So the more opportunities there are for all types of people in tech, the more opportunities there are for problems to get solved." ■

The future diplomat enrolled at Weinberg College in 1963, when a seminal event—the assassination of John F. Kennedy—inspired his decision to pursue a career in public service. Malott majored in political science, but courses in cultural anthropology and "non-Eurocentric" world history provided key lessons that would be reinforced throughout his career. "It's vital to understand that not everybody thinks the way you do," Malott observes.

Less obvious influences were the marching band (Malott was a drummer) and the Waa-Mu Show, for which he composed music and served as a rehearsal pianist. Those experiences cultivated logistical finesse, show-business instincts, and calm in the face of crisis—all useful, it turned out, for a career on the world stage.

Malott's first posting, in 1969, took him to war-torn Vietnam and planted the seeds of a fascination with Asia. Afterwards, stints across the continent alternated with posts at the State Department in Washington, D.C.

Along the way, there was language training—he became fluent in Vietnamese and Japanese—and an intensive program in economics, which built on the macro- and microeconomics he studied at Northwestern. "Every foreign service officer should study economics," he says. "And writing is critically important: you have to be able to write with clarity and precision."

Malott's greatest expertise and most visible contributions involved Japan, where his roles ranged from economics specialist to consul general. In April 2017, the Japanese government gave him one of its highest honors, the Order of the Rising Sun, praising him as "a steady guide" during the bitter U.S.-Japan trade conflicts of the 1980s and noting his post-retirement achievements as president of the Japan-America Society of Washington, D.C.

Underlying his success, Malott says, was his arts and sciences education, because a good diplomat is continually learning new things. "Northwestern instills the ability to see that there are many ways to approach a problem—to think in 360 degrees." ■



BACK TALK

Thank you for the article “The Domestic Arts and Sciences” in the fall/winter 2017 issue of *Weinberg* magazine.

We [home economics students in the 1960s] were blessed with **Ruth Bonde** as chair of the department and **Hilda White** as a professor of nutrition. Professor White had a Ph.D. in biochemistry and had done fieldwork in South America, so she was extremely knowledgeable about both the science and significance of nutrition. Since the home-ec majors took chemistry classes with the chemistry majors and pre-meds and enrolled in the same economics classes as the econ majors, we were superbly prepared.

I graduated Phi Beta Kappa in 1965 and earned a master’s degree in nutrition in public health at Penn State. I currently work with special-needs children from low-income families as a community dietitian with the Ohio Department of Health. My Northwestern education has been invaluable.

As our medical community becomes more aware of the importance of nutrition in the prevention of chronic diseases, I would love to see Northwestern offer nutrition courses again.

— **LINDA CHALFANT RO ’65, MS, RDN, LD**
Boardman, Ohio

Regarding the concerns raised in the article “Undemocratic Democracies”: A small step forward would be the implementation of ranked choice voting, as recommended by the group FairVote. Ranked choice voting allows for real-time runoffs, ensuring that unpopular candidates are not elected via pluralities. This approach can apply to voting at all levels of government and would not eliminate our presidential electoral college.

— **JAMES FLOYD ’67**
Hope, N.J.

I was surprised to open the most recent issue of *Weinberg* magazine to see a picture of a chimpanzee with a Donald Trump campaign hat. I think that no matter what your political leanings are, showing this in *Weinberg* magazine is disrespectful, even if a Northwestern professor had written about the similarities [“It’s an Alpha Male Thing” by Professor of Psychology **Dan McAdams**]. When in these situations, I like to imagine what the reaction would be if the parties were reversed. In this instance, I can’t imagine *Weinberg* would publish it.

— **JOHN MULTHAUF ’93**
Orlando, Fla.

One of the things that made Northwestern particularly special for me was the professor under whom I majored, Professor [of Religious Studies] **Edmund Perry**.

At the beginning of the first class I took with him, he told a joke. I have not the slightest recollection of the punchline, but I do remember it was a joke about a priest. A hand in the class flew up and a student said, “Dr. Perry, I am Catholic, and I am greatly insulted.” There was a long pause, and Dr. Perry said, “Well, let me answer that. If you remember nothing else from this class, please remember this: Any time you take yourself so seriously that you can no longer laugh at yourself, it has become demonic.” I consider that statement to be the most valuable lesson I learned in college.

I fear this is a lesson long since lost by the people who make up the college communities of today. I can think of no better way to recover it than for the College to de-emphasize the political correctness that has imbued so much of what it does. Banish identity politics. They are tearing the nation apart. Reemphasize the many academic disciplines in which Northwestern and its students excel, and once again learn to laugh and to share that laughter with others.

— **JOHN KELLEY ’59**
Shelburne, Vt.



Weinberg magazine welcomes letters to the editor. Please email your comments to weinberg-communications@northwestern.edu. Comments may be edited for grammar and brevity.



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PHOTO: ROB HART

[BREAKTHROUGH]

In Search of *Truth*

BY LISA STEIN

When **Lydia Wuorinen ’19** stumbled on an 1832 copy of *Truth, a gift for scribblers*, in the Northwestern library, she was intrigued by the impressive level of snark in a book so old. Nineteenth century literary critic William Joseph Snelling’s pointed satire took on verse by newspaper poets (“scribblers” or “vermin”) who were part of a “deplorable epidemic.”

The subjects of Snelling’s scorn, not surprisingly, did not take this well. Undeterred, in the book’s second and third editions Snelling asserted that he was motivated only by a sense of honor to save the public from literary horrors.

Wuorinen, a student in Associate Professor of English **Jay Grossman**’s research seminar, was curious about whom Snelling considered to be his audience—the general public, or the scribblers themselves and the editors who published them?

Information from the book’s small Boston publishing house, which would typically provide the answer, was scarce. Then Wuorinen had an “aha” moment: why not conduct a chemical analysis of the book, which would shed light on the quality of the materials and hence the demographic that could afford to read his writing?

In less than a week, she received approval from Northwestern librarians, conservators and chemists, who used x-ray fluorescence spectrometry to analyze the make-up and age of the book’s paper, ink and cover.

The analysis did not provide a definitive answer to Wuorinen’s question, but it did reveal numerous chemical impurities—including sulfur, potassium and arsenic—that suggest the book was not aimed at an elite audience. It turns out that *Truth* was not only as cheaply made as the periodicals it criticized, but in a literal sense more toxic. ■



LEARN MORE ABOUT

Lydia Wuorinen’s research on *Truth*:
wcas.nu/snelling-book

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Undergraduate classes ending in 3 and 8—from 1958 to 2013, plus the Class of 2017—are invited to Reunion Weekend.

Registration opens in July | alumni.northwestern.edu/reunion

All alumni are welcome to attend Northwestern's annual Homecoming celebration, including the football game against the Nebraska Cornhuskers on Saturday, October 13.



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