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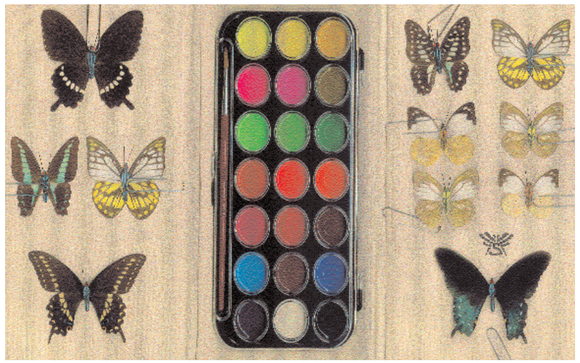
IMAGE MAKER

J. Seeley, a self-described "artistic misfit," uses a flatbed scanner as his "camera" and objects found in streets, including "shards of our automotive civilization," to construct layered collages.



Since his childhood, Professor of Art J. Seeley has had one continuing quest: to find new and creative ways to print realistic images in ink on paper.

"My mother recalled that I was working with potato prints and rubber stamps long before I started school," he says. "She remembered that I pushed anything I could get my hands on into felt ink pads and transferred the impression onto any paper or surface that was handy."

As a graduate student in photography at the Rhode Island School of Design in the early '70s, Seeley began experimenting with photographic images, printing them in ink on "real" paper rather than on what he terms "that shiny waterproof stuff called photographic paper." His combination of photography and printmaking, however, impressed neither his RISD professor (the famed photographer Harry Callahan) nor celebrity visitors who came to classes, including Diane Arbus, who suggested that Seeley give up photography as soon as possible. "Mixed media was still a questionable pursuit in the eyes of many teachers and practitioners of photography," Seeley says.

After that difficult start, his fortunes improved during the second year of graduate school when he played hooky to become principal photographer for the tour of Joe Cocker's hot rock-and-roll blues band, Mad Dogs and Englishmen. In addition to taking pictures of a motley band of musicians, singers, managers, producers, record executives, and groupies, he was part of a four-person film crew that shot a documentary of the tour, later released theatrically by MGM. He was able to pay off his education loans and buy all the camera equipment he ever wanted.

In 1975, three years after joining the Wesleyan faculty, he began a six-year project of photographing models costumed in black-and-white striped clothing.

"I worked with lighting and high contrast film to eliminate any trace of gray or shadow from the pictures. Form and contour were rendered surprisingly well by the black stripes alone—no gray, no grain, no tone, just rich black on white paper."

These images were exhibited around the country and were published as art in magazines, books, and photography annuals in 17 countries. The original striped portfolio, printed in a limited edition of 110, sold out. Seeley had dealers in New York and Chicago contracting to buy portfolios of his pictures before they were even printed. He proceeded to write *High Contrast*, a popular technical guide to high-contrast image-making.

Over the years, Seeley has collected hundreds of objects for use in his photographs that he has found in the streets, at flea markets, or at yard sales. He is especially fond of crushed pieces from cars that he recovered from the base of the local Arrigoni Bridge, which he calls "shards of our automotive civilization." His collection includes old game boards, balls and marbles, mounted butterflies, rusted tools, mannequin heads, crushed eyeglasses, bird feathers, and more. What is junk to others, he sees as potential subjects for his art. "To me, the exotic often resides in the mundane," he says.

His interest in working in the collage format enables him to incorporate pieces of images or objects into a completely new composite art work. Some of the elements that he employs in a recent work may have been photographed or collected as much as 25 years earlier. He is fascinated by what he terms "variations on a theme," so he may often use the same image or object in different ways from print to print.

In recent years Seeley has turned to digital photography, which is well-suited to his collages. Although he was at first reluctant to have anything to do with a computer, he now creates vibrant and often haunting images with a flatbed scanner, PhotoShop, and an Epson inkjet printer.

"I work with a flatbed scanner as my only camera," he says. "I put objects directly on the glass and build my collages in layers. The objects that go on the glass first will be in the front of the composition. The last layer of the construction will be a background material, often a sheet from my collection of art papers. It is a rather precarious process of building an upside-down composition."

After photographing a collage with the scanner, Seeley then spends additional hours manipulating digital files to arrive at the final composite image. He sometimes has to do dozens of inkjet prints until he is reasonably satisfied with the color quality of a print on a particular kind of paper. He also collaborates with master printers who can produce larger and better prints directly from his digital files.

He recently received a foundation grant that will support his creative work

for the next five years. As a frequent speaker at universities around the country, he has observed a great deal of student work and concluded that Wesleyan students' photography is as good or better than that of other students, even those in the top art schools. Last year he had the unusual distinction of being invited to address both leading professional photography educational organizations: the Photo Imaging Education Association International Conference and the National Conference of the Society for Photography Education, where he entertained participants with an overview of the highs and lows of his career, entitled "35 Years as an Artistic Misfit." This talk proved so successful that he has presented it to Wesleyan alumni clubs in Seattle and San Francisco and at the Center for the Arts.

Seeley's highly-sought-after classes concentrate on shooting good photographs rather than making perfect prints. "Printing is important, but it is always possible to hire someone to print for you. If you're going to become a professional photographer, you must do your own shooting," he says. Seeley spends at least half a day each week reviewing students' contact sheets to give them advice on improving their work, and he customizes weekly lectures to the specific needs and interests of his students. He particularly encourages his students to work with and learn from each other. They often pair up to shoot a roll of film or collaborate with students involved in other media or subjects unrelated to art.

Last year was especially gratifying for Seeley. Six of his students— Alexandra (Sasha) Rudensky '01, Jennifer Rizzuto Congregane '01, Eleanor Michael '01, Colleen Will '03, Matthew Earp '01, and Colleen Galbraith '03—were awarded prizes of valuable camera equipment and film from a competition sponsored by the Photo Imaging Education Association. Their pictures were included in a traveling exhibition in five countries in 2001 and 2002. (Seeley was also awarded the grand prize for faculty/staff in the same competition.) In addition, Rudensky was awarded the first annual Leica Camera/Jim Marshall Photo Scholarship for her series of images of Russia, which were part of her senior thesis. She received $2,500 and a Leica camera outfit.

"He is a giving and dedicated teacher and is genuinely invested in the success of his students."

Lindsay Dickinson '01, who received high honors for her creative thesis, says: "He is a giving and dedicated teacher and is genuinely invested in the success of his students. His advice always points me in the right direction, yet is open-ended enough to allow my own ideas to generate and develop independently. Working as a photography lab assistant and looking through work of past students, I saw that his teaching seems to consistently yield work of amazing quality and creativity."

After leaving Wesleyan, his students frequently achieve distinction, including fine art photographers Mark Steinmetz '82, whose work has appeared at the Museum of Modern Art; Lyle Ashton Harris '88, whose images have been shown at the Whitney Museum of American Art; Joanne Lukitsh '76, a photohistorian and an associate professor of art history at Massachusetts College of Art; Brooks Kraft '87, a nationally recognized photojournalist whose pictures of President Bush have appeared in *Time* magazine; Mayita Mendez '96, a photojournalist cited by *Photo District News* as one of "30 Emerging Photographers to Watch"; and Barbara Woike '79, New York City photo editor at the Associated Press.

—*David Low*

See the magazine Web site for samples of work by J. Seeley's students.

BILL BURKHART

J. SEELEY, *Painted Lady*, 16" X 22", Inkjet print (Page 4)
"I often admired this ancient mannequin in Professor of Art David Schorr's office, and he invited me to put it on my scanner. It was the most three-dimensional object that I had scanned up to that point. Its actual coloring is very faded and drab. I turned up the colors, beyond what they had been in real life."

J. SEELEY, *Paintbox*, 16" X 23", ink jet print (Page 5)
"This image was originally put together as a color test for a new printer I was trying out," Seeley says. "It is a challenge to print because of the range of colors and the delicate level of detail in both the darks and lights."

J. SEELEY, *The Red Pear*, 16" X 22", ink jet print (above)
"The leaves I poached from a real pear tree in front of a motorcycle shop just over the Arrigoni Bridge. The original fruit on the tree looked too dull, so I went to Super Stop and Shop and found a livelier, larger pear. As I often do, I picked up the feather on one of my walks the same day."

WESLEYAN PARENT IS CHARTER MEMBER

Alumni-Elected Trustees Join Board

The annual alumni election of trustees produced three new board members: Mike McKenna '73, David Hill '86, and Oyeshola Olatoye '96.

McKenna is president and chief executive officer of Marsteller Advertising, a unit of Burson-Marsteller, an international communications firm. He specializes in corporate image work and has carried out award-winning projects for pro bono clients such as UNCF's "A Mind Is a Terrible Thing to Waste" campaign.

He recently helped the National Football Foundation create "Play It Smart," a program that prepares inner city high school athletes for college. A documentary on this topic aired on CNN.

McKenna began his career as a member of Wesleyan's annual fund staff, and he continues to serve as his class agent.

Hill is vice president, general counsel and secretary for Verizon Communication in Maryland and the District of Columbia. Responsible for legal and regulatory matters, he also helps plan corporate strategy for Verizon in the constantly changing marketplace created by the Telecommunications Act of 1996.

Formerly an associate with Hogan & Hartson, he helped to secure injunctive relief preventing the use of race-based drug courier profiles in the state of Maryland.

Hill played football at Wesleyan, majored in the College of Social Studies, and obtained a law degree from Harvard Law School. He serves as his class agent.

Olatoye is a consultant with the urban planning and management-consulting firm of Hamilton, Rabinowitz & Alschuler in New York City, where she is working on projects such as adaptive reuse of the former convention center in Washington, D.C.

She recently served as issues director for Mark Green, the Democratic mayoral nominee in New York City. An authority on urban school reform, she was director of public engagement for the Campaign for Fiscal Equity, a nonprofit organization that sued New York State, alleging an inadequate school finance system. She created a statewide campaign to build public support for reform of the state's school finance system.

She also has been a member of the Chancellor's Advocacy Task Force for the New York City school system.

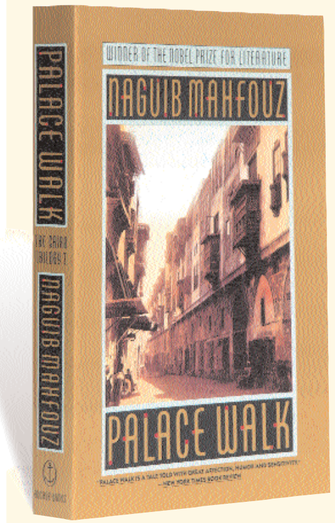
In addition, George Ring, a '98 and '02 Wesleyan parent, has been elected to the Board as a charter trustee. In 1977 he founded and became chief executive officer of Cross Country Cable. Later, he established Cross Country Wireless and brought wireless video services to California in competition with the cable giant TCI. Pacific Telesis purchased his company in 1995, and he subsequently founded a new company, Wireless Cable International.

Ring is a member of Wesleyan's campaign council and serves on the New Jersey Network Foundation, which supports public broadcasting in New Jersey. He is a recipient of a distinguished alumnus award from Seton Hall University, where he is a longtime member of the board of trustees.

PICK OF THE SYLLABUS

INDIRA KARAMCHETI,
Associate Professor of English,
Selects *Palace Walk* by Naguib Mahfouz

I always tend to love the books I'm currently teaching or will teach soon. Right now, my favorite book of all time is Nobel Prize winner Naguib Mahfouz's *Palace Walk*, which I taught this past spring term. The first volume of *The Cairo Trilogy*, the novel details the lives of an Egyptian middle-class family: Mr. Ahmad Abd al-Jawad; Amina, the mother and wife; and their children, three sons, Fahmy, Yasin, and Kamal, and two daughters, Khadija and Aisha, all of whom live in a house on Palace Walk street. Much of it concerns the minutiae of everyday life. Amina is a submissive and adoring wife, taking pride in all domestic details, a loving mother wanting nothing more than the happiness of her children.



For the daughters, living in strict seclusion, that means an arranged marriage and an address of their own. The sons have different fates: Fahmy, the scholar of the family, has a secret passion for the girl next door, to whom he has never spoken, and develops an equal passion for politics. Yasin is a bullish young man, living for sex and sensuality. Kamal is still a boy—mischievous, and loving his mother and attention. The father, Ahmad Abd al-Jawad, has a double life. At home, he is a severe, rigidly autocratic *paterfamilias*, considered unusually strict with his womenfolk even by other observant Muslims, while outside, he is a sensual, fun-loving man, relishing wine-, women-, and song-drenched evenings as well as nights that Omar Khayyám would envy.

Throughout the novel, we grow to know these characters intimately and to feel for and with them, whether their concerns are the small and intimate ones of love and adolescence or the larger one of politics.

By the end of what is after all a lengthy book (498 pages!), my students were loath to let them go; several had plans to read the next two equally massive volumes of *The Cairo Trilogy* over the summer.

Yet *Palace Walk* details a world and an experience not only enormously different from the usual American one, but one which, due to recent events, has been obsessively uncovered by the spurious knowledge generated by the popular media and by what is known as Orientalism. This is Egypt, the Middle East, the Arab world, the Muslim world, set during a time when England still asserted its right to rule and when young men were beginning to refute that rule. How is it that we, Western readers, can love and identify with these people?

And, indeed, one aspect of the novel in particular posed a challenge to the class: the relations between the sexes. The parents' marriage seems to fulfill our Western stereotypes: domineering, cold, all-powerful husband; submissive, powerless wife, married by arrangement practically out of the cradle and ignorant of the world outside her doorstep. I startled the class by challenging them to understand this as the epitome of a happy marriage. How can that be? Ahmed and Amina fulfill the needs and desires of the other; they know the rules of their marriage and their world and live successfully by them. Their lives are deeply rich, gratifying, and absorbing—to themselves—and that is what we must understand when attempting to deal with other cultures. Such an insight is a genuine gift that the novel gives us. These characters are not two-dimensional pawns in some historical tract or political treatise. They are individuals creating their own happiness in the complexity of the conditions into which they have been born—as we do.

By presenting a world view and experience centered on the individual, intimate, even domestic, life, *Palace Walk* invites the sympathetic identification that allows us as readers to enter into another world, and see through another's eyes. This is the gift that literature in general can give us. *Palace Walk* allowed my students and me to leave behind our own cultural blindness.

My favorite books to teach all have this quality: they surprise. They jolt us out of our usual assumptions and preconceptions, our prejudices and received ideas about the world. They make us understand something new or anew. Because learning is itself a pleasure, books like *Palace Walk* offer us a great experience: to be surprised by joy.

EXPERIMENTS IN ECONOMICS

Student Traders Test Theories

The scene may not be as frenzied as the pit of the Chicago Mercantile Exchange, but students in a class taught by Assistant Professor of Economics Tanya Rosenblat are actively trading—in pens.

Rosenblat is handing out free pens to half the members of her class on Experimental Economics and Strategic Planning. "Write down the price at which you would be willing to sell your pen," she says. Then she asks those who didn't receive a pen to write down what they would pay to buy one.

She tallies the results at the chalkboard: offering prices range from $.35 to $1.50; purchase bids from $0 to $.50. The pen owners clearly value their possessions more highly than do potential customers.

Such transactions go on all afternoon in Economics 311: real economic experiments with real money (small amounts obtained through a grant). They are the basis for insights into what people value and why, and how they will back their beliefs with action.

"Experimentalists didn't set out to prove standard economics wrong," says Rosenblat. "They just found lots of facts that didn't agree with standard theories. We can test economic theories under precisely controlled and measured conditions that are typically unavailable with field data, and sometimes we find that the theory needs to be modified. I strongly believe that people learn economics better by acting it out. Even theories that hold up are better learned using experiments."

Her interest in modifying standard economic theories began with an exploration of why some people incur credit card debt at high interest rates while maintaining savings accounts with low interest rates. Why don't they pay down the debt with savings? Rosenblat describes such people as "time-inconsistent and sophisticated." They wish to splurge today, hoping to be more frugal in the future, but realizing they will probably transgress again. "In order to restrict the consumption of future selves," she continues, "they try to restrict their access to funds by tying money up in restricted savings accounts."

The experiment with pens illustrates another phenomenon: the "endowment effect." People who have something value it more highly than those who don't. Experiments by psychologists and experimental economists have shown that people do behave this way. For instance, Book-of-the-Month and CD clubs take advantage of the endowment effect when they send you the selection first with an option to return it. Most likely, you will be more willing to spend money on the selection if you already have it.

Later in the class, Rosenblat poses a question: How much would you pay to participate in the following game: A coin is flipped repeatedly. The initial potential payoff is $2 and is doubled each time tails comes up. The game continues until the first heads occurs, when the potential payoff becomes the actual payoff. Thus $2 is the least you can win (if heads comes up on the first toss).

One student answers $0, but a number are willing to pony up $3 or $4, and one optimist is willing to put down $50. When asked the expected value of this transaction, he answers "infinity." The class murmurs in disbelief, but he is mathematically correct. If you keep playing, there is no limit to your possible winnings. But some people don't gamble as if they are calculating expected value. They seem instead to be calculating something called "expected utility."

Rosenblat's explanation of expected utility covers the chalkboard with graphs and calculus equations. Any fantasy that Economics 311 is all games vanishes in a puff of chalk dust. People who are "risk averse," she explains, have a "concave utility function" — they value something less if the likelihood of getting it is pretty slim, even if the payoff is large.

Most of her class, it seems, will not be heavy betters in the lottery.

—*Sandy Becker*

WRITER'S LIFE RECALLED

Horgan House Is Dedicated

The Russell family's former carriage house behind their High Street mansion became a cultural center for Wesleyan in 1962, when Pulitzer Prize-winning author Paul Horgan, who joined the faculty as director of the former Center for Advanced Studies, made it his home.

Professor of English and American Studies Joseph Reed recalls the evenings at Horgan's home as filled with all the best an intellectual community has to offer—dialogue between brilliant minds with far-ranging interests.

"I remember T. S. Eliot and James Baldwin visiting," says Reed, who with his wife, novelist Kit Reed, was among Horgan's friends on campus who gathered at his home for dinner and hours of conversation. "He had really grand people there: Edmund Wilson, Jean Stafford, Sir Herbert Read (a sculpture historian)."

Horgan died in 1995, and the university community celebrated its commitment to the artist's memory during Reunion with the dedication of the Paul Horgan House. Many individuals made contributions to this project in Horgan's memory, and approximately 50 people attended the ceremony. It was the culmination of an effort begun in 1995, in a meeting between Professor of German Studies Jerry Wensinger (now emeritus), Joe Reed and then-vice president and treasurer Robert Taylor.

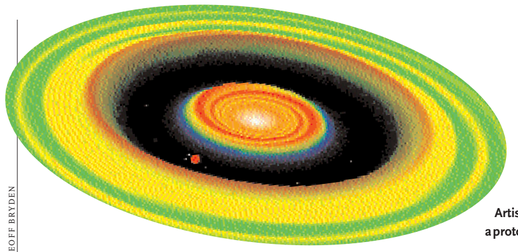
Reed and Taylor laid out the ground rules for this project: The Horgan House was to be a useful addition to the campus; it must house Horgan's library; it must hold office space; it must have an area maintained as it was during Horgan's years there.

The house recalls Horgan's style of comfortable and worn elegance. Offices upstairs will house administrators, while the downstairs will provide meeting areas.

At the dedication, admirers of the late artist wandered through the house, perusing the books. Speaking at the ceremony, Howard R. Lamar, Sterling Professor Emeritus of History at Yale University, reminisced about Horgan's lively wit and wide-ranging interests.

"It was clear from his remarks that Lamar valued Horgan as a historian as well as a writer and painter," noted Reed. Twice a Pulitzer Prize winner, Horgan also won recognition in 1955 from historians with Columbia University's Bancroft Prize, given for *Great River: The Rio Grande*.

BILL BURKHART



GEOFF BRYDEN

Artist's rendition of a protoplanetary disk

WESLEYAN ASTRONOMERS FIND

A Possible New Cradle for Planets

In the era of the Hubble Space Telescope, one of the most significant of recent discoveries in astronomy originated with Wesleyan undergraduates working with the small, 24-inch telescope in the Van Vleck Observatory.

At a June 19 press conference in Washington, D.C., Professor of Astronomy William Herbst announced that an international team led by him had detected a circumstellar disk orbiting a distant and young star. The system is unique among all known celestial objects, he explained, because the disk is changing as astronomers observe it and may be forming planets close to the star, which resembles our own sun when it was just 3 million years old. Other known protoplanetary disks, imaged by Hubble, are far from their stars and do not evolve on human timescales.

Alan P. Boss, a Carnegie Institution astrophysicist who specializes in extrasolar planets, said that the discovery "might turn out to be a Rosetta Stone for deciphering some of the mysteries of planet formation."

New York Times science writer John Noble Wilford noted that Wesleyan students first called attention to the star, named KH 15D, in the late 1990s, when they noticed that the star regularly "winks" by nearly fading out altogether. The regularity of the winking—occurring every 48.3 days for a length of 18 days—strongly suggested that the source was an orbiting body.

No single object could account for an 18-day eclipse of the star's light, which led Herbst and his colleagues to conclude that waves of dust grains, rocks, and possibly larger objects may be swirling about the star in a broad disk.

Herbst said that the Wesleyan group has observed the star for the past six years, but only within the past year has it gained major attention from astronomers. Wesleyan graduate student Catrina Hamilton coordinated a worldwide collaboration of astronomers so that the system could be observed during 24-hour periods. The data from this effort convinced the group that they had a major finding in their hands.

Media covering the announcement included the *New York Times*, the *Los Angeles Times*, *USA Today*, CBS News, CNN.com, MSNBC.com, other dailies, and science publications such as *Nature* and *Science News*.

Although the disk is not visible from Earth (probably not even with the Hubble Space Telescope), Herbst said that observations of the eclipsed star are enabling astronomers to make detailed inferences about the disk's structure.

Boss speculated that the star already had created a planet. "It would be fairly newly formed," he said, and its existence around such a young star, if proved, would force theorists to revise their models of planetary formation.

The star is 2,400 light-years from Earth. The three-million-year-old age of KH 15D makes it a celestial infant; our own sun is 4.6 billion years old.

Wesleyan astronomers have one advantage over scientists using large telescopes whose schedules are blocked to the minute: as long as the weather holds, Herbst said, Wesleyan students can observe objects over long periods of time and discover attributes of stars that may be missed in short viewing periods.

THE WESLEYAN CAMPAIGN NEWS BRIEFS

THE WESLEYAN CAMPAIGN

CLASS OF 2002 SETS NEW RECORD WITH SENIOR CLASS GIFT

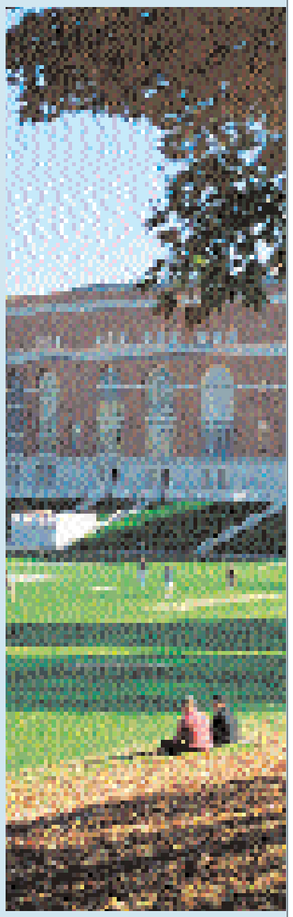
Participation in the Class of 2002 senior gift soared to 90 percent this year, breaking the 88-percent participation record set by last year's graduating class. A portion of the $3,500 raised already has funded the installation of a memorial bench, sweet gum tree, and commemorative plaque next to the Davison Art Center to honor the victims of the September 11 terrorist attack. The balance of the gift will be used to establish a prize designed to cover the application fees of a senior student who intends to go to graduate school. Suzanne Appel '02, the senior gift chair, coordinated this record-breaking effort.

SOUTH COLLEGE WILL RECEIVE NEW BELLS

At the suggestion of Helen Reeve and Professor Emeritus Jerry Wensinger, family and friends of Professor Peter Frenzel and his wife, Laurie, have named a new bell in honor of the Frenzels' 40th anniversary. The bell will commemorate the couple's devotion to the bells of South College and Professor Frenzel's rejuvenation of the bell-ringing tradition at Wesleyan. This gift followed a commitment from Dr. and Mrs. Walter F. Engel Jr. '46 to name a bell in memory of Dr. Engel's brother David '49. The original 11 bells in South College were installed in 1918 as a gift from the Class of 1863. Five additional bells were donated in 1966 by then-president Victor L. Butterfield. Student bell ringers appeared on *CBS Sunday Morning* last year and more recently produced a CD of songs and peals. A campaign is underway to restore and expand the instrument.

GIFT FROM SON HONORS DAVID DAY'S 75TH REUNION

Timothy T. Day '59 commemorated the 75th Reunion of his father, David M. Day '27, who for many years has been the oldest alumnus in attendance at Reunion festivities. The $5,000 gift, announced during Reunion and Commencement weekend, will be allocated to the Day Family Capital Fund, which Tim and his father established in support of Wesleyan. David and classmate Karl D. Hartzell '27 carried the Class of 1927 banner this year as they proudly led the alumni parade.



Gruen Contends Ethics and Genetics Are Out of Sync

Assistant Professor of Philosophy Lori Gruen says genetic advances are reshaping how we think of ourselves. If only the level of public discourse matched the science.

Cloning is a hot topic right now, and Lori Gruen is in the middle of the debate. But she's not a scientist or a medical doctor; she's a philosopher with a strong sense of social justice and a passion for a well-reasoned argument. For her it's all about ethics. Just don't call her a bioethicist.

Q: What sparked your interest in ethics?

LORI GRUEN: In one of the very first philosophy courses I took as an undergraduate, we read about ethical issues involved in our treatment of animals. That moved me. I also have always been interested in questions of justice and inequality, particularly as they affect the least well-off. Concerns about women's inequality, homelessness, poverty, and our destruction of the environment were very prominent in my early philosophical investigations and led me to think more carefully about a variety of practical ethical problems.

Q: How do you approach the study of ethics?

G: I am in the tradition of philosophers who bring philosophy to bear on practical, political, and ethical topics of the time—utilitarian social reformers such as Bentham, Mill, Sidgwick, and, currently, Peter Singer, a public intellectual. By the way, not many women in the world align themselves with "consequentialist ethics." I'm one of maybe just three or four.

Q: What is consequentialist ethics?

G: When we engage in ethical reflection and action, we are trying to promote well-being. We are thinking not so much in terms of what is permissible or impermissible in the abstract, or what some authority tells us we should do, but rather what we can do to try to make the world better. So we're going to judge the rightness or wrongness of behavior, attitudes, perceptions, or actions based on the kinds of good consequences they bring about.

Q: How do you view problems in bioethics, for example, in this framework?

G: A lot of people call themselves bioethicists who don't have a significant background in philosophy, or they have a specific take on certain issues derived from a particular religious tradition. But looking back to the Bible is not necessarily going to give us a way of critically reflecting on the issues of our time such as genetic enhancements and genetic therapies. Most bioethicists who adhere to religious doctrine are guided more by doctrinal issues than by the concern to promote the well-being of all. Nor is our political system helpful in considering these complicated questions; the tendency is to think, ban it or don't ban it. But there's too much at stake to accept such oversimplifications; we need to allow for a great deal of engagement with these hot issues. I believe an ideal method for guiding ethical deliberation in specific cases would be to bring together, in a nongovernmental setting, a sophisticated committee comprised of people who have training in ethics, medical professionals, medical managers—people who run hospitals—parents, and others with vested interests.

Q: The issue of cloning has been politicized; hasn't this created confusion about what is and isn't human cloning?

G: Exactly. But this is actually a great opportunity for science educators—a perfect opportunity to explain what is going on. It's not possible to be engaged in a certain kind of ethical discussion without drawing lines, but the gray areas—those between the lines—are so much more interesting and rich than popular discourse has allowed us to understand. I think that cloning has raised important opportunities for education in both ethics and science. I do think there is a tendency in people not to think very deeply about these questions. We tend to get unhelpful knee-jerk reactions from politicians and the public. So the questions need to be reframed, and that's one of the roles for ethics: We can reframe the questions to help people think more deeply about the benefits and the dangers of new biotechnologies.

Q: What are some of the dangers associated with the issues on the table?

G: There is danger in failing to reflect on the way the genetic revolution has altered our conceptions of ourselves and our relationships to each other. In the animal cloning cases, most notably with Cc:, the cloned kitty, the idea has cropped up that you no longer have to mourn the genetic loss of your pet—to which I say, "I didn't mourn the genetic loss of my pet!" When did "genetic loss" become a category of mourning? It only became a possible category when the genetic revolution took hold of our imaginations. So advances in genetics don't just change the possibility of minimizing pain and ending disease, but they also have the ability to reshape how we think of ourselves. I'm really interested in this topic, and it has not been adequately discussed. Genetic makeup is important, but genes are not personality makers; they're not trait makers. The mythology of genes has taken off in ways that are inaccurate. There is this very skewed view that I can take the genetic material of one creature and create virtually the same creature based on that genetic material, but it's not clear that such a thing would happen at all. It's also not clear whether ethically one should pursue that course. Both genetics and environment create personality and other traits. I think the overall question needs to be reformulated.

Q: Aside from cloning, what are some of the more interesting ethical issues you see on the near horizon?

G: Environmental issues: whether or not we should drill in the Arctic, our use of various wilderness areas, endangered species protection—how much we are willing to think about global environmental issues and greenhouse gas emissions. These issues present important ethical and political questions that are going to stay with us. I don't think that we are doing a very good job thinking ethically about our obligation to ourselves, to people from other societies, to other generations, and to the animals that live in these environments. It's a very sad thought that in our own lifetime, elephants might go extinct. Orangutans may no longer live in the wild because of human encroachment. I think those are serious and urgent ethical concerns.

Q: We often hear less developed nations say that Western nations polluted and expanded heedlessly as they grew, so isn't it hypocritical of the West to demand that other countries seeking a better standard of living adhere to higher environmental standards?

G: Given the path we've gone down, it's easy to see development and environmental protection as being at odds. But there are ways of bringing these together, of pursuing sustainable development in a more appropriate and practical way that protects the environment and provides developing nations ways to improve the standards of living for their people. I'm also deeply concerned about the impact that certain kinds of health policies have on children across the world. It's not a new topic, but it's surprisingly persistent when you think about how hydration salts for children cost 15 cents and we don't do anything about that, and kids could get vaccinated for easily prevented diseases and we don't do that. Or think about the drugs available for HIV that can actually slow down if not halt the ravages of the HIV infection, but 80 percent of people who are suffering from HIV are in Africa and cannot get these medicines. Questions about distributive justice persist and are deeply disturbing.

Q: You sound like you are fighting a lot of uphill battles, yet you seem optimistic.

G: I can't figure out why I am so optimistic. I deal with these issues every day, and yet I maintain this optimism (although lately I find that I shield myself from the news). Part of what sustains my optimism is my teaching. Students are really open to thinking in new ways to solve age-old problems and the cutting-edge new problems that technology has generated. Students are always interested in trying to think about these things differently, and that helps me sustain my optimism.

Q: What do you think motivates your students?

G: The students here are remarkably engaged and responsible about their education. They are interested in challenging and reflecting critically in formulating their own views about ethics. I've had a very easy time getting students to think reflectively about their ethical positions and arguing for those positions. I came here from Stanford in part because Wesleyan is committed to enhancing ethical and political reasoning. My position is a new one in this area. Although ethics has always been a part of philosophy departments, we are committed to keeping ethical reasoning one of Wesleyan's strengths. —*David Pesci*

In the animal cloning cases…the idea has cropped up that you no longer have to mourn the genetic loss of your pet—to which I say, "I didn't mourn the genetic loss of my pet!" When did genetic loss become a category of mourning?

BILL BURKHART